

Wyoming PYs 2016-2017

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Overview

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year workforce development strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all jobseekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

Options for Submitting a State Plan

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan — a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult Program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker Program (Title I),
- the Youth Program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Literacy Program (Title II),
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III), and
- the Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included,

Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” (Sections II and III of this document) where specified, as well as the Program-Specific Requirements for that program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))*
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

How State Plan Requirements Are Organized

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross- program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State’s economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State’s workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State’s efforts to support the State’s strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
 - State Strategy Implementation,
 - State Operating Systems and Policies,
 - Assurances, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
 - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs.

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.* While discussion of and strategies for every target population is not expected, States must address as many as are applicable to their State’s population and look beyond strategies for the general population.

I. WIOA State Plan Type

Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

Unified State Plan. This plan includes the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Combined State Plan. This plan includes the Adult Worker Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation Program as well as one or more of the optional combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a unified plan

Combined Plan Partner Program(s)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

No

Unemployment Insurance Programs (Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment Program (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant Program (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Program (Programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532)))

No

II. Strategic Elements

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs.

a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Economic Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include-

i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

ii. Emerging Industry Sectors and Occupation

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

iii. Employers' Employment Needs

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in 1 and 2 above, provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

When an industry experiences two consecutive quarters of positive over-the-year change over 5.0 percent, it is considered a growing industry, and similarly, when an industry experiences two consecutive quarters of negative over-the-year change over 5.0 percent, it is a declining industry. In 2010Q1, the number of jobs in manufacturing decreased to 8,497 from 9,277 in 2009Q1, a decrease of 797 jobs (see Intro Table 1). As shown in Manufacturing Table 1, from 2009Q1 to 2010Q1, there were seven subsectors of the manufacturing industry that were declining with an average change [The percentage for average change is the employment-weighted average percentage change of the current and prior quarters (employment change current quarter + employment change prior quarter) / (employment current quarter + employment prior quarter).] of at least -18.1 percent: wood product (-38.9 percent), printing & related support activities (-19.9 percent), plastics & rubber products (-34.4 percent), fabricated metal products (-21.9 percent), computer & electronic products (-30.2 percent), transportation equipment (-18.1 percent), and furniture & related products (-24.7 percent). In 2010Q1, there were no growing subsectors of the manufacturing industry.

During 2015Q2, the potential beginning of another economic downturn in Wyoming, the manufacturing industry experienced an over-the-year decline of -0.1 percent, or -13 jobs (see Intro Table 1). This was a smaller decline than the over-the-year decline seen in 2009Q1, the start of Wyoming's previous economic downturn. Contrary to Wyoming's previous downturn (2009Q1 to 2010Q1), there were three subsectors of the manufacturing industry that were growing in 2015Q2: beverage & tobacco products (13.4 percent), electrical equipment & appliances (11.4 percent), and textile products (7.1 percent; see Manufacturing Table 1). The two manufacturing subsectors that were declining in 2015Q2 were machinery (-13.9 percent) and transportation equipment (-10.6 percent). Machinery manufacturing and transportation equipment manufacturing are heavily dependent on the mining industry and experienced an average change in employment of greater magnitude than the average change in employment of the growing manufacturing subsectors. The declining subsectors will likely not experience growth in average monthly employment until the mining industry experiences growth.

The manufacturing industry has experienced an overall negative trend in hiring rate since 2007 (see Manufacturing Figure 3). After a short, gradual decline, the rate of hire declined more rapidly, getting as low as 7.6 percent in 2010Q1. At the end of the previous economic downturn, hiring increased and in 2011Q3, 15.7 percent of Wyoming manufacturing employees were hires. The manufacturing industry experienced a very small increase in the rate of hire in 2014Q3, reaching 15.9 percent, followed by a steep decrease to 9.1 percent in 2015Q1.

A decline in the rate of hire indicates a slowdown in the growth of the industry. During the previous economic downturn (2009Q1 to 2010Q1) the four-quarter moving average of hiring rate for manufacturing dropped approximately 5.0 percent and has remained below pre-downturn levels. With the current slump in oil prices, and the apparent decline in average monthly employment, it is likely that the manufacturing industry will not see significant employment growth in the near future.

Demographics Table 1 shows the percentage of nonresidents and individuals over the age of 55 who are working in Wyoming by industry. An industry that has a large number of nonresidents may be recruiting out-of-state workers because of a lack of available and qualified

workers in Wyoming. If an industry has a high number of individuals who are over age 55, there could be a need to recruit new employees in the near future to replace employees who retire.

In 2014, 9.4 percent of individuals working in the manufacturing industry were nonresidents and 22.0 percent were over age 55. Within the next 10 years, approximately one in five individuals (or 20.0 percent) working in the manufacturing industry will be nearing traditional retirement age of 65. The potential departure of nonresident workers and pending retirement of older workers could create opportunities for Wyoming residents to fill vacancies in manufacturing.

Within the manufacturing industry there are refinery subsectors, for example, petroleum refineries (NAICS 324110) and cane sugar refining (NAICS 311312). Manufacturing Figure 4 shows the average weekly wage for the entire mining industry and the refining subsectors in Wyoming. The average weekly wage for the refining subsectors was on average, nearly \$600 higher than that of the manufacturing industry as a whole. This higher average weekly wage is due to union representation of refinery workers.

According to Manufacturing Table 2, the most common occupation group in the manufacturing industry is the production group. This group makes up 34.5 percent of the top 25 occupations in the manufacturing industry and includes occupations that work heavily within the mining industry: welders, cutters, solderers, & brazers (SOC 51-4121); petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators, & gaugers (SOC 51-8093); first-line supervisors of production & operating workers (SOC 51-1011); machinists (SOC 51-4041); and team assemblers (SOC 51-2092).

The five most frequently occurring occupations in Wyoming's manufacturing industry make up approximately 25 percent of all manufacturing jobs in the state and include welders, cutters, solderers, & brazers (SOC 51-4121); petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators, & gaugers (SOC 51-8093); maintenance & workers, general (SOC 49-9071); industrial machinery mechanics (SOC 49-9041); and machinists (SOC 51-4041).

The article R&P article titled, "Planning vs. Performance: Why Outcome Wages May Fall Short of Accountability Measures" (Hammer, 2015) discusses maintenance & repair workers, general, and why individuals trained in this occupation do not immediately earn the high average annual wage found in the workforce. For example, Manufacturing Table 3 shows an annual mean wage for maintenance & repair workers, general, in Wyoming of \$61,490. According to Hammer (2015), 4.7 percent of all new hires in the manufacturing industry from 2011Q4 to 2013Q3 worked as maintenance & repair workers, general, and earned an average hourly wage of \$17.00. There are many factors that lead to lower-than-average wages among occupations, including industry stability, worker experience, and availability of benefits (healthcare, retirement, etc.). The article can be found at <http://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/trends/0615/toc.htm> and provides further detail on Research & Planning's (R&P) New Hires Survey and the reasons why training program participants may not initially earn the wages they were trained to earn.

When comparing the annual mean wage of the five occupations presented in Manufacturing Table 3 in Wyoming to surrounding states, only one occupation earns less in Wyoming than surrounding states: petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators, & gaugers, earning \$72,080 in Utah, but only \$65,680 in Wyoming. Of the five occupations listed in Manufacturing Table 3, machinists earned the lowest annual mean wage in Wyoming (\$45,920), which was still higher than the mean annual wage for this occupation in surrounding states. The annual mean wage of the total of all occupations for Wyoming and surrounding states in the manufacturing industry is highest in Colorado (\$53,870), Wyoming (\$53,360), and Utah (\$45,970).

The long-term industry projections published by R&P for 2012–2022 call for an increase in employment growth in the manufacturing industry of 9.9 percent. Due to the decline in oil prices, and the manufacturing industry’s top occupations’ dependency on high oil and gas prices, actual industry growth may fall short of R&P’s projections (see Manufacturing Figure 5). New technology used in the mining industry as well as global current events cannot be accounted for by projections.

Construction

Introduction

The construction sector, which represented about 9.0 percent of total Wyoming employment in 2014, includes “erecting buildings and other structures (including additions); heavy construction other than buildings; and alterations, reconstruction, installation, and maintenance and repairs” (NAICS, 2007). The nature of construction is highly seasonal, with employment peaking in the summer months. The long-term quarterly employment growth rate in construction is 1.2 percent. However, between 2005Q2 and 2008Q4, construction grew rapidly (9.8 percent per quarter) and then declined quickly between 2009Q1 and 2010Q1 at an average quarterly rate of –14.5 percent per quarter.

State and federal government are large players in total demand for construction. Between 2010 and 2026, the Wyoming Department of Transportation anticipates spending \$5 billion on the Highway Improvement Program from its total of \$9.88 billion in expected revenue; about half of the expected revenue may take the form of federal aid, but 25.4 percent of the remainder (or \$1.24 billion) is projected to come from state sources, including “royalties and other severance taxes on oil, natural gas, and coal” (Wyoming Department of Transportation, 2010). An unanticipated decrease in commodity prices could result in lower-than-expected income from royalties and severance taxes, leaving fewer state dollars available for the Highway Improvement Program. As part of this construction sector analysis, this section will present historical construction employment data, review the changing demographics of the construction industry, take a closer look at Wyoming’s construction industry’s most employed occupations, and conclude with possible government initiatives which could influence aggregate demand for construction in Wyoming.

Employment

During the most recent period of rapid economic expansion (2005Q2 to 2008Q4), construction employment grew at an average rate of 9.8 percent per quarter, and then decreased by approximately 14.5 percent per quarter between 2009Q1 and 2010Q1. Aside from the rapid

expansion and following contraction, employment growth in the construction sector has maintained an over-the-year growth rate of about 1.2 percent per quarter since 2001Q1 (see Construction Figure 1).

Over-the-year construction employment, as a share of total statewide employment, has maintained an 8.6 percent average since 2001Q1, when omitting the high growth period leading up to the economic downturn of 2009Q1 to 2010Q1 and the economic downturn itself. Including all quarters since 2001Q1, the share of construction employment relative to total employment is slightly higher at 8.9 percent.

The mining industry is a major driver of the Wyoming economy, and the percent change in construction employment over time closely follows the changes in mining employment, but with a higher degree of seasonality (see Construction Figure 2). The over-the-year change in employment in both construction and mining is also correlated to the over-the-year change in the Henry Hub Spot Price of natural gas (see Construction Figure 3). As previously noted, royalties and severance taxes from the mining industry contribute to the funds available for state construction projects.

Demographics

Construction Figure 4 shows a four-quarter moving average (to account for seasonality) of construction industry demographics, including the average age of Wyoming residents in construction, the percent of construction workers over 55, and the percent of construction workers who are nonresidents. (Nonresidents are individuals for whom demographic data could not be found in any of R&P's administrative databases, such as the driver's license file obtained through a memorandum of understanding with the Wyoming Department of Transportation.) In the post-downturn economy (2010Q2 to 2015Q2), the share of older workers grew at an average rate of 1.1 percent per quarter. Construction firms may have chosen to keep more experienced, older workers during the recession and lay off younger workers. The changes in the average age of construction workers follow a similar pattern.

During the most recent economic expansion, the share of nonresident construction workers grew from 15.3 percent in 2005Q1 to 31.9 percent in 2007Q4, but fell to 21.1 percent in 2011Q1. An expansion period may temporarily draw workers from other states as opportunities for higher wages and more hours become available. The number of workers, percent of workers age 55 and older, the percent of nonresidents, and the average annual wage by industry are listed in Demographics Table 1).

Occupations

Construction Table 1 lists the 25 construction occupations with the highest employment in Wyoming, and Construction Table 2 summarizes the average annual wage in Wyoming and surrounding states for the top five construction occupations. Except for carpenters, Wyoming did not have the highest average annual wage in 2014 for any of the top five occupations. In some cases, this may mean that some workers have an incentive to move or commute to another state for a higher paycheck. In 2014, Montana offered higher wages to

construction laborers (SOC 47-2061), electricians (SOC 47-2111), and operating engineers & other construction equipment operators (SOC 47-2073) than the other states surrounding Wyoming.

An in-depth report from R&P on 21 construction occupations, including carpenters (SOC 47-2031); operating engineers & other construction equipment operators (SOC 47-2073); electricians (SOC 47-2111); plumbers, pipefitters, & steamfitters (SOC 47-2152); heating, air conditioning, & refrigeration mechanics & installers (SOC 49-9021); welders, cutters, solderers, & brazers (SOC 51-4121); insulation workers, mechanical (SOC 47-2132); and electrical power-line installers & repairers (SOC 49-9051) can be found online at Construction Labor Shortages in Wyoming and the Nation at web link located here: http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/w_r_research/constr_2014.pdf.

Future Influences

As previously discussed, state and federal governments are large drivers in demand for construction, and new laws can change the sources and amount of funding available for projects such as the Highway Improvement Program. Compared to surrounding states, Wyoming has the second lowest state fuel tax in the region (24 cents per gallon), behind Colorado (22 cents per gallon). Changes to Wyoming's Motor Fuel Tax, or changes in fuel use (i.e. tourism) could increase or decrease the money available for state-funded construction. For a further discussion of fuel use in Wyoming, see section 1A(i) of this report.

At the federal level, a five-year transportation funding bill in the form of the "Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015, Part" was passed on Dec. 1, 2015, extending funding and federal-aid to "highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes" (http://transportation.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hr_3763_ih.pdf).

Mining

As the U.S. entered the Great Recession beginning in December 2007, overall employment in Wyoming continued to increase (see Figure 1). Beginning in 2009Q1, Wyoming experienced five quarters of over-the-year decreases in employment with 2010Q1 having the largest overall decrease at -6.3 percent. The natural resources and mining industry plays a significant role in Wyoming's economy. According to NAICS, the mining industry "comprises establishments that extract naturally occurring mineral solids, such as coal and ores: liquid minerals, such as crude petroleum; and gases, such as natural gas." (NAICS, 2007 p. 161).

Employment

The overall change in employment followed that of the mining industry. During the last economic downturn (2009Q1 to 2010Q1), mining experienced a 14.6 percent decrease in employment (see Intro Table 1). Mining Figure 1 shows the over-the-year employment change in mining which followed the overall employment change shown in Figure 1. As mentioned in the introduction, the price of oil and coal has

experienced a substantial decline beginning in the fall of 2015. Between 2014Q2 and 2015Q2, employment mining experienced a decline of 3,196 jobs (11.8 percent) which was the largest percentage decline for any industry.

R&P currently publishes industry employment projections over a 10-year period (2012–2022). As of 2014, mining was projected to increase over this period by 4.0 percent. However, due to the recent fluctuations in oil, gas, and coal prices, this projection may be inflated and in need of revision. Mining Figure 1 also shows the hypothetical over-the-year change based on the previous downturn (2009Q1 to 2010Q1). According to this methodology, employment in mining is expected to fluctuate from a low of –6.4 percent to a high of 3.9 percent.

Appendix A Figures 3a–3e illustrate the importance of the mining industry and the overall health of Wyoming’s economy. Mining influenced employment in nearly every industry with construction and manufacturing following closely with that of mining between January 2001 and June 2015. Regional differences are also present. As shown in Appendix A, during the previous downturn, the southwest and northeast regions of the state saw large decreases in mining employment (–1,659 and –839, respectively). The same pattern is seen for the time period between 2014Q2 and 2015Q2.

Unemployment

To further understand the effects of the decline in mining employment, Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims were examined. Initial claims can be considered a count of individuals who apply for benefits following a job loss. Continued claims are a count of the number of weeks an individual collects UI benefits. Mining Figure 2a shows the over-the-month and over-the-year change in both initial and continued claims for those individuals in natural resources and mining. The largest change in over-the-month initial claims occurred between December 2014 and January 2015 (156.1 percent). Mining Figure 2b shows the over-the-year initial claims spiked in April 2009 with a 553.8 percent increase and remained flat until January 2015 (an increase of 128.4 percent).

Mining Figures 2c and 2d show the over-the-month and over-the-year continued weeks claimed in natural resources and mining. The spikes in over-the-month change in continued weeks claimed resemble that of initial claims (January 2009 and February 2015). Over-the-year change in continued weeks claimed was highest in July 2009 (1,404.9 percent). The over-the-year change remained flat until January 2015 with a sharp increase in June 2015 (416.5 percent).

Hiring

As seen in Mining Figure 3, the hiring rate remained consistently above 10 percent for both mining and all other industries prior to 2009Q1. Wyoming’s overall economy is affected seasonally by the construction and leisure & hospitality industries. Mining is less seasonal and is affected more by the price of coal and oil (see Construction Figure 3). From 2000Q1 to 2015Q2, the lowest hiring rate was 7.7 in

2015Q2. The highest hiring rate after the recession was 21.4 in 2011Q2. The hiring rate never recovered to pre-downturn levels and remains in a downward trend. It is likely that the hiring rate will remain flat or continue to decrease with the slump in oil prices.

Mining Demographics

Nonresident workers made up nearly 1 in 5 (17.1 percent) workers in Wyoming in 2014 (see Demographics Table 1). The percentage of nonresident workers in mining was slightly lower than Wyoming as a whole at 16.5 percent. Mining is the third lowest industry after construction (11.9 percent) and leisure & hospitality (8.3 percent) in terms of percentage of workers 55 and older at 16.1 percent. Due to the high average annual wage (\$68,244), high school students may decide to pursue a job in mining rather than continue on to college. Average annual wages in mining is nearly double that of wages statewide. The subsectors within mining also show wage differences. As shown in Mining Figure 4, trona mining average quarterly wage was higher compared to all other mining subsectors. For example, in 2015Q1, the average wage in trona mining was \$27,163 compared to \$23,106, a difference of \$4,057. The large difference observed may be due to the trona subsector participating in union employment.

Occupations

Five occupations within the mining industry had an estimated employment of over 1,000 in 2014 and of these four were in the construction & extraction occupational group (see Mining Table 1). Not surprisingly, general & operations managers (SOC 11-1021) had the highest mean annual wage (\$136,559) while secretaries & administrative assistants, except legal, medical (SOC 43-6014) had the lowest at \$35,860. Office clerks, general (SOC 43-9061) along with secretaries & administrative assistants, except legal, medical were the only two occupations of the top 25 in mining to earn less than \$40,000 annually.

At the occupational level, the distribution of nonresident workers differs. Through the New Hires Job Skills Survey (as discussed in the introduction of this document), R&P is able to identify the types of occupations that were filled and the demographics of the individuals hired to fill them. For example, as seen in Mining Table 2, 40.0 percent of the 151 general & operations managers (SOC 11-1021) who were new hires in 2014 were nonresidents. This occupation typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher. Extraction workers, all other (SOC 47-5099) and geological & petroleum technicians (SOC 19-4041) also had high percentages of new hires who were nonresidents (20.2 percent and 25.0 percent, respectively). All three of these occupations were also identified in the top 25 most frequently occurring occupations in mining in Mining Table 1.

As seen in Replacement Need Table 2b, 47.6 percent of bus & truck mechanics and diesel engine specialists (SOC 49-3031) in educational services and state government are 55 and older, which constitutes a replacement need for this occupation in education and state

government. As the oil & gas industry continues to decline, those individuals may be a resource for those in education and government who begin to retire. For example, as shown in Mining Table 1, it is estimated that 300 individuals are bus & truck mechanics & diesel engine specialists who could find work in the education and government industry. Further, helpers, extraction workers (SOC 47–5081) in the mining industry (N = 470), could find employment in education and government sectors under highway maintenance workers (SOC 47–4051) due to skills transferability.

R&P projections for employment growth in natural resources & mining (4.0 percent) from 2012 to 2022 are likely inflated due to the unexpected decline in oil and gas prices. R&P is currently in the process of revising these projections to reflect the relative decline in employment. Further complicating accurate projections is the growth in employment in surrounding states. For example, Colorado has seen growth in employment of 3.7 percent between 2014Q1 to 2015Q1 while Wyoming's growth has remained relatively unchanged at 0.8 percent. This growth in surrounding states may attract workers who cannot find employment in Wyoming.

Staffing Patterns

The difference in staffing patterns in the mining industry between Denver and Wyoming creates additional regional competition for labor. Intro Figure 2 shows that the mining industry in Wyoming has a higher percentage of construction & extraction occupations (54.6 percent versus 23.5 percent in Denver), transportation & material moving occupations (11.0 percent versus 6.2 percent in Denver), and production occupations (8.1 percent versus 0.0 percent in Denver), while the mining industry in Denver has higher percentages of business & financial occupations (14.4 percent versus 1.8 percent in Wyoming), management occupations (11.8 percent versus 4.6 percent in Wyoming), and architecture & engineering occupations (11.5 percent versus 4.5 percent in Wyoming). Workers in the mining industry may be more attracted to work in Denver where there could be more demand for their chosen occupations.

Public Sector – Educational Services and Public Administration

Educational Services

The educational services sector (NAICS 61) includes elementary and secondary schools; colleges, universities, and professional schools; exam preparation and training; and educational support services. In 2014, this sector represented approximately 10.0 percent of total Wyoming employment.

According to R&P's long-term 2012–2022 industry projections, employment in educational services is projected to grow by 10.0 percent, or approximately 1.1 percent per year. This projection was calculated in 2014, using data from a time when Wyoming was more economically secure and may be too high in light of current economic trends related to declining commodity prices. Employment in educational services may also be affected by population changes, as the loss of jobs in other industries may influence population out-migration as school-age children may move out of state with parents searching for employment elsewhere, especially in light of relatively strong regional employment growth (see the section on regional competition).

Employment

As shown in Education Figure 1, over-the-year growth in this sector was mostly positive between 2000 and 2009, with the largest growth occurring in 2004 and 2009. After the state's economic downturn, the rate of employment growth in this sector declined, and has been mostly negative since mid-2013.

As shown in Education Figure 2, employment in educational services grew steadily between 2000 and 2015. During 2003 and 2004, employment increased rather rapidly, but immediately returned to pre-2003 levels and continued to increase at a moderate rate. In January 2001, there were 25,377 in educational services and in June 2015 there were 29,181 jobs, a net gain of 3,804 jobs.

Demographics

Employment in educational services could be affected by several factors including an aging population of workers, state population trends, and budgetary issues. In 2013, R&P prepared a report detailing wages, turnover, workforce retirement trends, and data on an aging workforce and replacement need within state elementary and secondary schools (NAICS 6111) (Bullard, D., Gallagher, T., Glover, T., Harris, P., Knapp, L., Manning, P., & Moore, M.; 2013). This report can be found at http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/education_costs/2013/monitoring_2013.pdf.

As shown in Intro Figure 3, 28.1 percent of people employed in educational services in 2014 were age 55 or older, compared to a statewide average of 18.4 percent. However, nonresidents only made up 8.0 percent of people working in educational services, compared to the statewide average of 17.1 percent for total employment. This indicates that many employees working in educational services are nearing the traditional retirement age of 65 and hiring tends to be local. This may provide potential workers for jobs that could be filled by people who have lost their jobs in other sectors, such as mining or construction.

Occupations

Education Table 1 shows the 25 most frequently occurring occupations in the educational services industry during 2014, as well as the corresponding average annual and median wages. The largest proportion of jobs in this industry were teacher assistants (3,040, or 10.1 percent) with a mean annual wage of \$28,396. Substitute teachers constituted 9.4 percent (2,820) of jobs in this industry while elementary school teachers, except special education, accounted for 9.1 percent (2,730) of the total. Eleven of these occupations had a mean annual wage greater than \$50,000, including middle school teachers, except special & career technical (\$60,312), special education teachers, kindergarten & elementary (\$57,988), and education administrators, elementary & secondary (\$93,481).

Included in Education Table 2 is a comparison of the mean annual wages in Wyoming to those in surrounding states for selected occupations. The mean annual wage for each of these occupations was higher in Wyoming than any surrounding state. For example, elementary school teachers, except special education were paid an average of \$58,191 in 2014, compared to \$50,180 in Colorado and

\$41,460 in South Dakota. Similarly, Wyoming middle school teachers, except special & career/technical education were paid an average of \$60,312 in 2014 while those in Colorado were paid an average of \$50,540 and those in Nebraska were paid an average of \$51,160.

As shown in Replacement Need Tables 2a and 2b, more than one-fourth of people working in several occupations in the educational services sector in 2014 were age 55 or older. Because of this, there may be occupations with openings that could be filled by people displaced from similar occupations in industries such as mining or construction. For example, 430 secretaries & administrative assistants, except legal, medical, or 41.6 percent of the total working in educational services, were age 55 or older. These are positions that might be filled by people with similar experience from other industries. Similarly, nearly half of all maintenance & repair workers, general (172, or 48.6 percent) in educational services were age 55 or older. These positions might be filled by people with construction or mining maintenance experience. For more discussion about this, please see the replacement need section of this document.

Future Influences

Budget deficits due to declining tax revenues from mining may also affect employment in the educational services sector. Community colleges in the state receive “about 60 percent of their budget revenue from the state based on enrollment” (Casper Star-Tribune, November 11, 2015). Some of these schools are currently introducing hiring freezes similar to those in state government. It’s possible the University of Wyoming could be similarly affected in the future.

Public Administration

The public administration sector, which represented about 10.4 percent of total Wyoming employment in 2014, includes “federal, state, and local government agencies that administer, oversee, and manage public programs and have executive, legislative, or judicial authority over other institutions within a given area” (NAICS, 2007). Public sector employment has less seasonality, or quarter-to-quarter fluctuation, than the economy as a whole. On average, public administration employment has kept pace with total employment with a long-term average quarterly growth rate of 1.5 percent from 2000Q1 to 2015Q3 (see Admin Figure 1. As part of this public administration sector analysis, this section will present historical public employment data, review the changing demographics of public administration, take a closer look at the most common public sector occupations, and conclude with a short review of situations which could change employment in the public sector.

Employment

Since 2000, both statewide and public sector over-the-year employment has increased each quarter by an average of 1.5 percent. During the economic expansion that lasted from 2005 to 2008, total employment grew at an average over-the-year rate of 3.8 percent per quarter, compared to 2.7 percent for public employment. Public employment continued to grow during the economic downturn of 2009Q1 to 2010Q1, at a rate of 2.1 percent, when total employment was decreasing by 4.1 percent. However, since 2010Q2, average over-the-year employment in public administration has decreased by 0.7 percent per quarter, in contrast with the total employment increase of 0.9 percent per quarter (see Admin Figure 1).

As a percent of total quarterly employment, public administration accounted for an average of 10.7 percent between 2000Q1 and 2015Q2; public employment as a percent of total employment peaked at 11.5 percent in the second and third quarters of 2010, up from a low of 9.8 percent in 2007Q4. Admin Figure 1 shows that percent changes in the share of public employment are mainly a result of changes in total employment, as the number employed in public administration has remained relatively constant over time. The percent change in public administration employment over time is relatively independent of changes in mining employment, which is closely related to the price of natural gas (see Admin Figure 2).

Demographics

The four-quarter moving average of the percent of public employees over age 55 has increased 78.2 percent since 2001Q1, comparable to the 80.0 percent increase in the four-quarter moving average of the percent of the total workforce over 55. Since 2001Q1, the average quarterly over-the-year share of public employees over age 55 has been about 32.0 percent greater than the share of total Wyoming employment over age 55. However, measured since 2010Q2, the first quarter following the end of Wyoming's previous economic downturn, the difference in the percent of public employees to the total workforce over age 55 has been 27.0 percent. On average, Wyoming residents in public administration are about 3.6 years older than the overall workforce. As more baby boomers reach the traditional retirement age of 65, the relative share of public employees over age 55 and the average age may continue to decrease.

Occupations

Admin Table 1 lists the 25 occupations in public administration with the highest employment in Wyoming. Protective service occupations including police and sheriff's patrol officers (SOC 33-3051), correctional officers & jailers (SOC 33-3012), and protective service workers, all other (SOC 33-9099) comprised 8.6 percent of public sector employment in 2014 and are "expected to grow rapidly in the next several years," according to O*Net Online, a website sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. Admin Table 2 summarizes the average annual wage in Wyoming and surrounding states for the top five public administration occupations. In all cases, occupations in public administration in Colorado earned more in 2014 than those same occupations in Wyoming. In some cases, this may mean that some workers have an incentive to move or commute to another state for a larger paycheck.

Future Influences

Government shutdowns, such as the federal shutdown of October 2013, and hiring freezes, such as the Wyoming state government hiring freeze initiated by Governor Matt Mead in October 2015, are key drivers in public administration employment. According to the Casper Star-Tribune in an article from August 2013, Governor Mead's goal has been "a smaller and more efficient state government" since his inauguration in 2011, and in response to the reduced revenues forecasted by the Census Revenue Estimating Group report of October

2015, Governor Mead announced a hiring freeze for state employees (Casper Star-Tribune, 2015). Since the state receives royalties and severance taxes based on the price of coal, oil, and natural gas, future employment in public administration may depend on the future of these commodities.

(6) Other industries

Leisure & Hospitality (Tourism)

While lower crude oil prices certainly hurt Wyoming oil producers and the associated employment generated by the mining industry, lower prices of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel benefit consumers nationally. Tourism Figure 1 displays these prices from January 2005 to November 2015.

Lower transportation costs for consumers leave them with more discretionary income. The JPMorgan Chase & Co. Institute (2015) estimates that for every dollar saved at the gasoline pump, consumers spend at least 73 cents on other items. The total extra spending is likely to be higher, since the institute could not necessarily account for all purchases (Farrell, 2015).

Declining gasoline and diesel prices tend to lead to more vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Wyoming leads the nation in VMT per capita at 16,272 based on 2011 data (Baxandall, 2013). That is more than 20 percent higher than the next highest state, Alabama. Therefore, Wyoming consumers are aided proportionally more than consumers in other areas. Additionally, Hopper Research (2015) found that airfare prices were 17 percent lower in October 2015 than the previous October. Hopper Research attributed this decline to this year's dramatic decline in oil prices. For November and December 2015, prices are projected to be 16 percent lower than 2014, while prices are projected to bottom out in January 2016 (Hopper Research, 2015).

Effect of an Increase in VMT and the Impact on Wyoming Tourism

This increase in discretionary income and cheaper travel costs may lead to increased tourism, which could help Wyoming's economy. For example, Yellowstone National Park had record attendance in 2015 (Reuters, 2015). While increased tourism cannot fully alleviate the negative impacts from low energy prices, it does lend some stability to the economy, in part due to its contribution to the diversification of Wyoming's economy that policymakers have been striving to achieve. While tourism and related industries only comprise approximately 3.3 percent of gross state product (GSP; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2015), these industries account for approximately 12.3 percent of overall employment based on 2013 data (QCEW, 2015). Note that some of the activity in industries such as food service and accommodations is not fully attributable to tourism.

Even if consumers' destination is not in Wyoming, increased VMT along major Interstates 25, 80, and 90 will add sales tax and fuel tax to Wyoming's tax revenue.

While the effects of increased VMT are relatively stable in terms of employment – such as a moderate increases in employment at restaurants and gas stations or convenience stores – consumer demand for many of the tourist attractions in Wyoming is highly seasonal.

Therefore, employment in tourism-related industries fluctuates with demand. Tourism Figure 2 displays two industries that are highly seasonal: skiing facilities (NAICS 713920) and marinas (NAICS 713930). For example, skiing facilities employ the most workers in the first quarter of each year while marinas employ the most workers in the second and third quarters of each year (QCEW, 2015). In addition to seasonal-related demand, societal factors such as the start and the end of the school year and holidays are also factors.

Conclusion

At the national level, consumers benefit from lower fuel prices in two main ways: an increase in discretionary income, and the suppression of inflation due to the impact on transportation costs of consumer goods. Lower fuel prices provide consumers with more discretionary income, which can lead to more VMT and leisure spending, such as vacations. Some of this spending may occur in Wyoming, such as trips to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

While tourism and related industries in Wyoming provide a substantial amount of employment (12.3 percent), these jobs tend to pay much lower wages than jobs in the mining sector and the value added component (3.3 percent of GDP) is much lower than mining.

Wyoming's economy is highly dependent on the production of crude oil (along with natural gas, coal, and other extractive resources). The mining sector provided 33.0 percent of GDP and 9.5 percent of employment in 2013. Therefore, the net effect of lower energy prices is extremely detrimental to Wyoming's economy.

Technology-related Industries

Research & Planning publishes quarterly wage and employment estimates for industries that have been identified as technology related in Wyoming. Technology-related subsectors can be found in manufacturing technology (measuring & control instruments), communications services (wireless telecommunications carriers), software & technology services (computer systems design & related services), and engineering services. A full list of technology-related industries can be found in Appendix A.

During 2015Q2, technology-related industries made up a small portion of Wyoming's total employment and payroll. As shown in Tech Table 1, the 924 establishments in technology-related industries made up 3.5 percent of all establishments, and the 4,981 jobs in these industries accounted for 1.8 percent of total employment. Technology-related industries also accounted for 2.4 percent of total wages. However, the average weekly wage for technology-related industries (\$1,199) was considerably higher (138.1 percent) than Wyoming's average weekly wage across all industries (\$868).

According to Brennan (2014), the proportion of technology-related employment and wages in Wyoming has remained consistent for the last decade. Since 2005, technology-related industries have accounted for between 1.7 percent and 1.8 percent of Wyoming's average annual employment and 2.3 percent and 2.5 percent of the state's total wages.

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations. Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Emerging Demand Due to Replacement Need

As discussed throughout this document, the greatest opportunity for employment in Wyoming through 2020 will be due to replacement need, not growth. There will be opportunities for younger workers to fill jobs vacated by older workers who age out of the labor market, even though the demand for labor will likely contract due to a decreased demand for oil and other related commodities. Industries that traditionally offer higher wages and greater access to benefits – such as educational services, public administration, and health care & social assistance – have a large proportion of workers age 55 and older, many of whom will likely retire over the next four years. This is illustrated in Replacement Need Table 1 and Replacement Need Figure 1. For example, Wyoming’s educational services sector had an average annual wage of \$35,080 and employed 34,177 persons in 2014, 28.1 percent (9,600) of whom were age 55 or older. With many of these 9,600 persons potentially retiring by 2020, this could be a source of jobs for individuals with similar skills who have been displaced from their jobs in industries such as mining or construction.

Wyoming’s educators, employers, and training providers may find it more cost effective to train displaced or younger workers for occupations that could have a relatively large number of openings in the next five years due to current workers nearing retirement. Replacement Need Table 2a shows occupations in educational services and public administration in which at least 40 individuals were age 55 and older in 2014. These occupations may be considered more cost effective training opportunities, since a relatively large number of individuals could retire by 2020. Many of the top occupations in this particular table are teaching occupations that would require significant postsecondary education and training. However, there are several occupations in educational services and public administration that require skills which displaced workers from industries such as mining or construction may already possess, such as bus drivers, school or special client (SOC 53–3022). Of the 935 individuals working as bus drivers, school or special client, in educational services and public administration in 2014, more than half (54.5 percent, or 510) were age 55 and older. Other occupations listed in Replacement Need Table 2a that may be attractive to displaced mining or construction workers include maintenance & repair workers, general; highway maintenance workers; executive secretaries & executive administrative assistants; and civil engineering technicians.

Replacement Need Table 2b shows occupations in educational services and public administration that may represent a less cost effective training opportunity. These occupations had a smaller number (fewer than 40) but substantial proportion (at least 25.0 percent) of workers age 55 and older in 2014. This includes several occupations with skills that may cross over to displaced mining and construction workers, such as first-line supervisors of construction trades & extraction workers; bus & truck mechanics & diesel engine specialists; mobile heavy equipment mechanics, except engines; and construction managers. The full table from which Replacement Need Tables 2a, 2b, and 3 were extracted can be found in Appendix A.

Fewer direct opportunities exist for the skills of displaced mining and construction workers in the health care & social assistance industry. As shown in Replacement Need Table 3, the majority of the occupations in this industry with 40 or more workers age 55 and older in 2014 were occupations that required advanced degrees and licensing. There are, however, some occupations that require less education and training than others. For example, 25.4 percent (947) of the 3,732 registered nurses in health care & social assistance in Wyoming were age 55 and older in 2014. This is an occupation that typically requires an associate's degree, which can be earned through two-year programs at many of Wyoming's community colleges. Other occupations in Replacement Need Table 3 that involve a two-year training or education program include licensed practical & licensed vocational nurses; radiologic technologists and technicians; and nursing assistants.

(iii) Employers' Employment Needs.

In 2014, Wyoming employers in the private sector and local government added an estimated 110,105 new hires, according to Research & Planning's (R&P) administrative databases. R&P conducts the New Hires Job Skills Survey, a sample survey of new hires identified in administrative databases that makes it possible to analyze employers' workforce needs each quarter of the calendar year. The purpose of this article is to explain how New Hires Job Skills Survey data can be used to identify trends in Wyoming's labor market by understanding employers' hiring practices: which types of jobs are filled, how much employers pay, benefits they offer, skills employers are seeking, and employers' reported satisfaction with the skills of new hires.

New hires are defined as individuals who, during a particular quarter, started working for an employer he or she had not worked for since at least 1992, the first year for which R&P has wage records (Knapp, 2011).

In fourth quarter 2009 (2009Q4), R&P began administering a New Hires Job Skills Survey (New Hires Survey) in order to broaden and enhance the organization's understanding of Wyoming's labor market. The New Hires Survey allows R&P to collect rich survey detail not previously available, such as occupation, rate of compensation, benefits, important job skills, employer satisfaction with a new hire's skills, retention, and more. R&P is able to link New Hires Survey data to existing administrative databases, such as Unemployment Insurance Wage Records and Wyoming Department of Transportation driver's license files. By linking results of the New Hires Survey with several administrative databases, R&P is also able to identify new hires characteristics such as age and gender.

The New Hires Survey is sent to a random sample of hires by employers in the private sector and local government each quarter. Since the start of the survey, R&P has attained at least a 70 percent response rate per quarter. Based on these quarterly samples of hires, R&P estimates the characteristics of all new hires. For example, in 2014Q2, Wyoming employers made 75,662 hires. Of those, 34,138 (45.1 percent) were new hires, or individuals who were hired by an employer for which they had never before worked. R&P then surveyed a random sample of the employers who employed new hires. The estimates of the characteristics of new hires that are presented in this article are based on New Hires Survey data collected over a two-year period from 2012Q3 through 2014Q2. The questionnaire R&P mails

to employers is available at http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/new_hires/NH_Quest_V3.pdf. Information on the methodology used for this survey and full statistical results are available at <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/newhires.htm>.

In 2014, Wyoming employers added 110,105 new hires based on unemployment insurance (UI) tax and wage administrative records. As shown in New Hires Figure 1, the majority (91,969, or 83.5 percent) of these new hires occurred among occupations requiring no formal education beyond a high school diploma. However, as shown in New Hires Figure 2, as educational requirements increased, so too did compensation. The average hourly wage increased with the level of education, and occupations requiring more than a high school diploma were more likely to be offered benefits such as health insurance, paid leave, and a retirement plan.

Education, Opportunity, and Wages

New Hires Table 1 shows employment and wage estimates for the five most frequently occurring occupations for each level of educational requirement, which is identified by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as the typical education required to enter a given occupation. Of the estimated 91,969 new hires in jobs requiring no more than a high school diploma (83.5 percent of all new hires; see New Hires Figure 1), many were hired to fill lower paying occupations such as food preparation & serving workers (5,769 new hires, \$8.00 per hour), retail salespersons (4,447 new hires, \$9.00 per hour), and cashiers (4,102 new hires, \$8.75 per hour). The average hourly wage for new hires jobs requiring no more formal education than a high school diploma was \$12.00.

B. Workforce Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA.* This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups** in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes: Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals. ** Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

i. Employment and Unemployment

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

ii. Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

iv. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent 'skill gaps'.

2. Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in Employers' Employment Needs above. This must include an analysis of –

A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop delivery system partners.*

Workforce development and One-Stop delivery system

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs

Wyoming's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs are administered by the Employment and Training Division, within the Office of Workforce Programs, of the Department of Workforce Services. Most of the direct assistance to employers and individuals is provided through the Division's 20 American Job Centers, as part of the American Job Center system. In this plan the terms are used interchangeably. The American Job Centers, which are located throughout Wyoming, use a One-Stop concept that coordinates the Division's services with services available through partner organizations in a single location, where possible.

Wyoming realizes the importance of aligning a wide range of publicly and privately-funded education, employment, and training programs while also providing high-quality customer service to job seekers, workers, and businesses through the One-Stop delivery system. A job-driven workforce development and service-delivery system links our state's diverse talent pool with specific employer and business needs. Our One-Stop centers continue to be a valuable community resource and an important source of assistance for individuals looking for work, or incumbent workers looking for opportunities to advance their careers. Wyoming is continually working toward aligning workforce, education, and economic development with regional in-demand jobs. This reinforces the partnerships and strategies necessary for One-Stop centers to provide job seekers and workers with the high-quality career services, education and training, and

supportive services they need to obtain and retain good jobs. The centers also help businesses find new skilled workers, as well as providing ongoing education and training opportunities to upgrade the skills of their current workers.

All American Job Centers throughout Wyoming are required to offer basic career services, individualized career services, and training services for Wyoming's adult, dislocated worker, and youth workforces. Such people include veterans, public assistance recipients, individuals with disabilities, older workers, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, unemployed and underemployed workers, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act certified workers, and anyone else needing assistance. WIOA, trade adjustment assistance, Wagner-Peyser services, and National Emergency Grant programs, when utilized, will be provided through the Employment and Training Division by merit-based public employees, in coordination with other organizations both within the American Job Centers and the communities they served.

Basic Career Services will be offered to workers through the Wagner-Peyser program, which is available in person and electronically through the Wyoming at Work system. In-person services include assistance with job registration through the Wyoming at Work system, resume preparation and repository, job matching, labor market information, skills testing, and career planning. Priority of service, enforced through Federal and State policies, will be provided at all centers.

Staff-assisted services, including WIOA individualized career services and training, are also offered at the American Job Centers. These services are coordinated with other programs, both within and outside of the American Job Centers, for clients' benefit. Through the centers, workers also will have access to the full array of other services provided by the Department of Workforce Services, including access to the unemployment insurance (UI) system.

The Department utilizes workforce information, including economic and labor market data provided via its Research and Planning section, for planning and decision making. This information is critical in determining the Department's target industries/occupations, in working with the agency's partners in business and education, and for ensuring appropriate matching of job openings and skills development.

Partner programs and organizations are jointly responsible for Wyoming's economic development and collaborate to create a seamless, customer-focused workforce development and One-Stop delivery system. This integrated service-delivery system enhances access to a variety of educational, training, and workforce programs, all having a common goal of an economically self-sufficient workforce for Wyoming. Five of the six core programs are co-located under the Department as required under WIOA: Title I Adult Program, Title I Dislocated Worker Program, Title I Youth Program, Title III Wagner-Peyser Program, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Many locations also include other partner programs such as the Veterans program, Senior Community Services Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Act program, TANF programs, OSHA, Workers' Compensation, and Job Corps. The sixth core program, Adult Education and Family Literacy is administered by the Community College Commission. All six core programs and many partner programs make up the One-Stop delivery system in Wyoming.

The Department of Workforce Services has skilled workforce specialists located at 20 American Job Centers statewide. These offices provide customers with detailed labor market information necessary to make educated decisions regarding their educational needs, training opportunities, and career goals. Additionally, a statewide system of resources and referral provides:

- Well-equipped resource rooms at each American Job Center featuring computers with resume writing software, various books and videos on resume writing and interviewing, college catalogs, typing and spelling tests, and other resource materials.
- Regularly scheduled, cost-free workshops at the American Job Centers for resume writing, interviewing techniques, job seeking tips, online job searching, and more.
- Interest and aptitude assessment tools for career exploration.
- Job training programs that can assist with the cost of additional education and job training for individuals who need to obtain or upgrade skills to enter self-sufficient employment.
- Referrals to the Adult Education and Family Literacy program for individualized and group instruction in literacy for eligible learners. Area of study are reading, writing, language, math, and computer skills. English literacy instruction and civics classes are also available for non-English speaking adults and people pursuing U.S. citizenship.
- High School Equivalency Certificate testing centers administered through the Wyoming Community College Commission that are responsible for administering high school equivalency tests to youth and adults.
- Referrals to Wyoming's community colleges, the University of Wyoming, Registered Apprenticeship, and other vocational training programs.

Adult and Dislocated Worker programs

The Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, in conjunction with Wagner-Peyser employment services, are the foundation of the workforce system. The system provides universal access to career services to meet the diverse needs of adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Under WIOA, adults and dislocated workers may access career services and training services. Training is supported via an Eligible Training Provider List, comprised of entities with a proven capability of securing quality employment outcomes for participants. Wyoming also provides enhanced access and flexibility for work-based training options such as Registered Apprenticeship, on-the-job training, and customized training.

There are three categories of career services available to adult and dislocated worker customers:

1. Basic career services

Basic career services are available to all individuals in the One-Stop delivery system, and include:

- Eligibility determination of whether an individual meets the program qualifications.
- Outreach, intake (including identification through the State's worker profiling and reemployment services for unemployment insurance claimants), and orientation to information and services available through the One-Stop delivery system.

- Initial assessment of literacy and mathematical skill levels including English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs.
- Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, and, when appropriate, career counseling, including the provision of information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and information about nontraditional employment opportunities.
- Performance information and program cost information about eligible training services providers by program and type of provider.
- Information on local area performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's One-Stop delivery system.
- Information relating to supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance, benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), housing assistance, assistance under the State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other supportive services provided through those programs.
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid for training and education programs not provided under WIOA.
- Information and assistance filing claims under unemployment insurance programs.
- Labor exchange services, which are the primary services provided by Wagner-Peyser staff, fall under the basic career services mentioned above.

2. Individualized career services

Individualized career services are made available when a determination is made that more customized services are needed for an individual to obtain or retain employment. One-Stop center staff may use recent previous assessments by partner programs to determine if individualized career services would be appropriate. Individualized career services may include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools, and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information about, eligible training providers.
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring.

- Career planning.
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. In some instances pre-apprenticeship programs may be considered as short-term pre-vocational services.
- Internships and work experience that are linked to careers.
- Workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical-thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, and ultimately employment.
- Financial literacy services.
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance.
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

3. Follow-up services

Follow-up services are provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Follow-up services could include, but are not limited to:

- Additional career planning and counseling.
- Contact with participant's employer, including assistance with work-related problems.
- Peer support groups.
- Information about additional educational opportunities.
- Referral to supportive services available in the community.

Employment status determination

In addition to providing career and training services to individuals who are unemployed, there remains a population of job seekers who are underemployed. Individuals who are underemployed may include:

- Individuals employed less than full-time who are seeking full-time employment.
- Individuals who are employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills and training.

- Employed individuals who meet the definition of a low-income individual in WIOA sec. 3(36).
- Individuals who are employed, but whose current earnings are insufficient compared to their previous job.

Individuals who are underemployed and meet the definition of low-income may receive career and training services under the Adult Program on a priority basis per Section 8 of TEGL 3-15. Individuals who meet the definition of an individual with a barrier to employment (WIOA sec. 3(24)) who are underemployed may also be served in the Adult Program. Individuals who are eligible for the Dislocated Worker Program and are underemployed may still be considered eligible for career and training services.

Training services

There is no sequence of service requirement for career services and training. This means that One-Stop center staff may determine training is appropriate regardless of whether the individual has received basic or individualized career services first. Training services may be provided if the staff determines, after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, that the individual:

- Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone.
- Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone.
- Has the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in the selected program of training services.

Training services, when determined appropriate, are provided through an individual training account or via a training contract. Training services must be linked to in-demand employment opportunities in the local area or planning region or in a geographical area in which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. The selection of training services is conducted in a manner that maximizes customer choice, is linked to in-demand occupations, is informed by the performance of relevant training providers, and is coordinated to the extent possible with other sources of assistance (WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)).

Individual training accounts are the primary method used for procuring training services. However, in certain circumstances a contract for training services may be developed instead of an individual training account as explained under section 134(c)(3)(G)(ii) of WIOA; the full list of exceptions is provided below;

- On-the-job training, which may include placing participants in a Registered Apprenticeship program, customized training, incumbent training, or transitional jobs.
- If the board determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of training services to use individual training accounts.

- If there is a training service program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in a local area by a community-based organization or other private organization.
- If the board determines that the most appropriate training could be provided by an institution of higher education to train multiple individuals for jobs in in-demand sectors or occupations.
- If the board determines a pay-for-performance contract is the most effective means of providing training services.

Work-based training -- Registered Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship is an important component of employment and training services that can be provided to our customers. We see apprenticeship most often used as a career pathway for job seekers and as a job-driven strategy for employers and industries. As Registered Apprenticeship programs, they automatically qualify to be placed on the State Eligible Training Provider List, allowing individual training accounts to support participants in Registered Apprenticeship programs and more directly connect those programs to One-Stop centers.

Some examples of typical Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors are:

- Employers who provide related instruction.
- Employers who use an outside educational provider.
- Joint apprenticeship training programs.
- Intermediaries.

Additional details of the Registered Apprenticeship Program will be provided in a later section of this plan.

On-the-job training

On-the-job-training continues to be a key method of delivering training services to adults and dislocated workers. Wyoming provides up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant to employers for training costs while the participant is in the program. There is an expectation that the worker will be retained by the employer upon completion of training.

Incumbent worker training

Incumbent worker training is a new option under WIOA, and Wyoming has not yet decided how best to implement this new opportunity.

Transitional jobs

Transitional jobs are another new type of work-based training that is allowed under WIOA. Wyoming believes it will be able to utilize this new training option to provide transitional jobs as a time-limited work experience that would be subsidized and in the public, private, or

nonprofit sectors for individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history, and in combination with comprehensive career and supportive services. Under section 134(d)(5) of WIOA, we may use up to 10 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker program funds to provide transitional jobs to individuals.

Priority populations

Wyoming focuses on serving individuals with barriers to employment, defined in WIOA section 3(24) and seeks to ensure access to these populations on a priority basis. The priority populations are discussed below and in other sections of this plan.

One-Stop center staff must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in the provision of individualized career services and training services.

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all U.S. Department of Labor funded job-training programs, which include WIOA programs. Priority must be provided in the following order:

1. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who have basic skills deficiencies receive top priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
2. Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult funds.
3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

Regarding military spouses, the definition of dislocated workers has been expanded to include military spouses who have lost employment as a direct result of a relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of the spouse. Military spouses may also qualify if they are a dependent spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment, a call or order to active duty, a permanent change of station, or the service-connected death or disability of the service member. Military spouses can also qualify if they are unemployed or underemployed and are experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment (WIOA sec. 3(15)E and 3(16)(A) and (B).

Wyoming has established written policies and procedures to ensure priority for the populations described above and are served in the WIOA Adult program.

Supportive services and needs-related payments

Wyoming has established written policies and procedures to ensure coordination with other entities to provide the highest quality, most comprehensive service provision possible, while preventing duplication of resources and services; this includes established limits on the amount and duration of these services.

Supportive services may include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation
- Child care
- Dependent care
- Housing
- Needs-related payments that are only available to unemployed individuals enrolled in training services

Coordination with trade adjustment assistance

Co-enrollment of workers certified eligible for trade adjustment assistance with the Dislocated Worker Program allows for the timely provision of individualized career services and improves the effectiveness of the trade adjustment program. Barriers to service delivery are eliminated while capitalizing on all of the resources available in the One-Stop delivery system. As trade-impacted workers formulate their reemployment plans, if additional career services are required, One-Stop staff are able to coordinate services provided by both programs to maximize the benefits available.

Other activities

As permitted by WIOA, there is flexibility when providing services with Adult and Dislocated Worker program funds. In addition to the required career and training services, Wyoming will use funds to provide additional job seeker services and business services, as well as to facilitate enhanced coordination between partner programs and entities at the State and local levels. Wyoming will use these funds to develop new types of technical assistance, develop new intake procedures, test new procurement methods that may lead to better outcomes for job seekers, and ensure provision of robust services for businesses through the workforce system. These activities include:

Job seeker services

- Customer support to enable individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities and veterans) to navigate among multiple services and activities.
- Training programs for displaced homemakers and for individuals training for nontraditional occupations, in conjunction with programs operated in the local area.

- Work support activities for low-wage workers, in coordination with One-Stop center partners, which will provide opportunities for those workers to retain or enhance employment.

Employer services

- Customized screening and referral of qualified applicants to employers.
- Customized employment-related services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations.
- Activities to provide business services and strategies that meet the workforce investment needs of area employers, as determined by the local area.
- Coordination of activities
- Employment and training activities are coordinated with child support enforcement activities of State agencies carrying out part D of title IV of the Social Security Act.
- Employment and training activities in coordination with cooperative extension programs carried out by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Employment and training activities coordinated with activities that facilitate remote access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system, including access through the use of technology.
- Improving coordination between workforce investment activities and economic development activities; promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.
- Improving services and linkages between the local workforce investment system and employers, including small employers, in local areas.
- Strengthening linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and the unemployment insurance programs.
- Improving coordination between employment and training activities and programs for individuals with disabilities. This includes programs carried out by State agencies relating to intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, as well as other activities undertaken by the statewide Independent Living Councils, and activities carried out by centers for independent living.
- Other Federal agency supported workforce development initiatives, under the departments of Transportation, Energy, Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Health and Human Services, and Defense.

Rapid Response

The purpose of Rapid Response is to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, or responding to layoffs and dislocations, and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses, and communities. Wyoming's system may include:

- Information and direct reemployment services for workers, including, but not limited to: Information and support for filing unemployment insurance claims, information about the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program and support for filing petitions, information on the impacts of layoffs on health coverage or other benefits, information on and referral to career services, re-employment focused workshops and services, and training including Adult Education Program activities.
- Delivery of solutions to address the needs of businesses in transition, provided across the business lifecycle, including comprehensive business engagement. Strategies and activities designed to prevent or minimize layoffs are also available.
- Convening, brokering and facilitating connections, networks, and partners to provide assistance to dislocated workers and their families, such as home heating assistance, legal aid, and financial advice.
- Strategic planning data gathering and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage economic change.

As mandated by section 134(a)(2)(A) of WIOA, Rapid Response activities are carried out by the Department of Workforce Services, as designated by the State, in conjunction with local areas, and other stakeholders. Wyoming has established a Rapid Response unit to carry out statewide Rapid Response activities and oversee such activities undertaken for affected local areas.

Youth Program

Wyoming's Youth Program supports an integrated service delivery system that provides a framework through which we can leverage other Federal, State, and local resources to support in-school youth and out-of-school youth. Partnerships are committed to providing high-quality services for all youth and young adults, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations, such as pre-apprenticeships or internships, and culminating with a good job along a career pathway. Employers are critical partners who provide meaningful growth opportunities for young people through work experiences, internships and pre-apprenticeships in real-world settings, and ultimately, jobs young people are ready to fill given the opportunity.

Expenditure requirement

Per WIOA guidance, Wyoming will be shifting the primary program focus of Title I youth formula programs to support the educational and career success of out-of-school youth. WIOA now requires that a minimum of 75 percent of WIOA youth funds be spent on out-of-school youth, which is an increase from the minimum of 30 percent under youth in school. This change represents a significant shift in the focus of WIOA youth programs by serving out-of-school youth who have substantial unmet needs and would benefit from the services provided under this program.

Calculations:

Expenditure rates will be determined after subtracting funds that are not spent on direct services to youth. The out-of-school youth expenditure rate is calculated after subtracting funds devoted to administrative costs.

Planning:

Wyoming feels it is not currently positioned to spend at least 75 percent of WIOA funds on out-of-school youth for program year 2015. Wyoming has chosen, per U.S. Department of Labor official guidance, to set its initial out-of-school youth expenditure for the initial year at 60 percent. Wyoming will work to increase out-of-school youth expenditures by a minimum of 10 percent compared to the previous year.

Tracking:

All expenditures for services are initiated in the local offices using a virtual operating system, Wyoming at Work. Payments are processed using Wyoming at Work which was developed by Geographic Solutions. Wyoming at Work was developed to promote the program's One-Stop concept of customer service. Wyoming at Work contains all necessary information about individual participants, job seekers, employers, and training providers, so that appropriate career, training, and employment services are provided to customers. Wyoming at Work is used in both the local and State offices.

Recruiting out-of-school youth

The biggest change under the WIOA Youth Program is the shift to focus resources primarily on out-of-school youth. Wyoming recognizes this transition to serve more such young people will take time to implement and is committed to incorporating strategies for doing so. Such strategies will include intake, objective assessments, and the development of individual service strategies, case management, supportive services, and follow-up services. Another focus is on providing a minimum of 20 percent of expenditures on work experience opportunities for youth.

Each Department of Workforce Services region, county, city, and local American Job Center has unique socioeconomic indicators which may require a more customized plan for delivering job training opportunities, leadership skill development, guidance and counseling, adult mentoring, job shadowing, supportive services, tutoring and study skills training, alternative secondary school services, paid and unpaid work experiences, Registered Apprenticeships, postsecondary transition, and employment opportunities. A major goal is to establish partnerships that support the Youth Services Program and continue to strengthen these relationships to the point they effectively provide WIOA program services now and into the future.

Young people who are at least 16 and not yet 25 years of age, who are low income, have basic literacy skills not commensurate with respective grade level, who are high school dropouts, homeless, runaway, foster care children, pregnant or parenting, legal offenders, disabled, or those that lack vocational goals and reside in geographically remote areas will be the focus of the proposed plan.

Targeted groups are identified using a variety of resources, such as:

- Coordinated assessment efforts with community partners

- Partnering state agencies
- Adult Education
- Alternative learning centers
- School counselors
- Probation and parole
- Youth group homes
- Residential treatment centers
- Mental health programs
- Other community organizations
- Social media

Partnerships are developed with such entities as mentioned above and are representative of the suggested partner structure outlined in the WIOA Act. These partners are a crucial resource as service providers for at-risk youth, including youth who are at risk of dropping out of high school, and those who have already dropped out or completed their high school education.

Staff will either solely, or working closely with a partnering organization, use an application process to determine and document an applicant's eligibility for WIOA youth services. New components will consist of incorporating career pathways as part of both an initial objective assessment and an individual service strategy. In addition, the service strategy will be directly linked to one or more of the performance indicators. The process evaluates a young person's residency, income eligibility, age, basic and occupational skills and abilities, aptitudes, interests, barriers to employment, support service needs, academic requirements, financial resources, and vocational potential. Required documentation and verification of eligibility will be maintained in the Wyoming at Work management information system, and/or in paper format. The program will also include effective connections to employers, including small employers, in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Transitioning in-school youth

Wyoming is continuing to serve Workforce Investment Act in-school-youth as they transition into the WIOA program. We do not want to prematurely exit in-school-youth from the program due to the shift in emphasis to the out-of-school-youth program. Wyoming will continue to use most of the remaining program year 2014 funds for services to in-school-youth in order to assist them in successfully completing the program. As fewer resources under WIOA will be devoted to in-school-youth, Wyoming, and local areas are identifying existing resources throughout communities that can provide services to in-school-youth.

Program elements

WIOA includes a total of 14 program elements which include the original 10 program elements under the Workforce Investment Act (which have been consolidated to nine as the summer employment opportunities program element is now a sub-element under paid and unpaid work experiences), and five new program elements.

The five new program elements are: financial literacy education, entrepreneurial skills training, services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations, activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training, and education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Wyoming will continue to make all program elements available to youth participants by focusing on improved educational achievement, preparing for and succeeding in employment, youth guidance, mentoring and service activities, and offering services that develop the leadership potential of young people.

Expanded work experience focus

Wyoming realizes that work experience is a crucial part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program, and there must be a minimum of 20 percent of non-administrative funds spent on work experience. Work experience helps young people understand proper workplace behavior and what is expected to gain and retain employment. Work experience can serve as a steppingstone to unsubsidized employment and is an important step in developing a career pathway. Wyoming understands that WIOA eliminates the language under corresponding Workforce Investment Act rule that on-the-job-training is not an appropriate work experience activity for youth. The 20 percent minimum will be calculated based on non-administrative youth funds and will include both in-school-youth and out-of-school-youth. Wyoming will track funds spent on work experience beginning with program year 2015.

Eligibility criteria

Wyoming has implemented new criteria for the WIOA Youth Program. To be eligible for the program, an individual must be considered an out-of-school youth or an in-school youth.

An in-school youth is an individual who:

- 1) Is attending school.
- 2) Is not younger than 14 or older than 21.
- 3) Meets the low-income requirement.
- 4) Has one or more of the following barriers: Basic skills deficient; is an English language learner; an offender; is a homeless youth or runaway, in foster care or has "aged out" of the foster care system; is pregnant or parenting; is a young person with a disability; is an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment, which includes:

- i) Chronic school absenteeism and truancy,
- ii) Youth in a single parent family,
- iii) Remoteness,
- iv) Limited English proficiency,
- v) Lacks employability skills (only youth 19–24 years old),
- vi) Chronic mental, behavioral, and/or medical health condition.

An out-of-school youth is an individual who is:

5) Not attending any school (as defined under State law).

6) Not younger than 16 or older than age 24 at the time of enrollment.

7) One or more of the following:

a) A school dropout.

b) A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recently completed school year calendar quarter.

c) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner.

d) An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system.

e) A homeless individual, a runaway, and individual who is in foster care or has aged out of the foster-care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act, or an individual who is in out-of-home placement.

f) An individual who is pregnant or parenting.

g) An individual with a disability.

h) A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment: which includes:

i) Chronic school absenteeism and truancy

ii) Youth in a single parent family

- iii) Remoteness
- iv) Limited English proficiency
- v) Lacks employability skills (only youth 19–24 years old
- vi) Chronic mental, behavioral, and/or medical health condition

Vocational Rehabilitation

The mission of the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to work for and with individuals who have disabilities so they can achieve their employment, independence, and economic goals.

Disability Determination Services is responsible for determining the eligibility of Wyoming residents who apply for disability benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a State–Federal program. The Federal share is 78.7 percent; the State share is 21.3 percent. The Rehabilitation Services Bureau has 16 area offices and 22 satellite offices. Division field offices assist eligible individuals to become employed. Persons receiving vocational rehabilitation services have a wide range of disabilities. Most offices are already co-located in the One–Stop centers across Wyoming.

The Central Office houses the administrator, who is responsible for overall administration of the statewide programs. The administrator determines program scope and policies, promotes public interest and acceptance, directs budget funds, develops program plans, and provides for staff development, research, and evaluation. The Central Office staff provides administrative support to the other elements of the Division through fiscal accounting, budgeting, and payroll; statistical records, reporting and closed case file control; and staff development.

Also under the umbrella of the administrator are the State Rehabilitation Council and the State Independent Living Council.

Activities	Educational Activities	Gaps
Career Pathway Plan	AEL local program teams are completing Career Pathways (CP) training for Adult Education certification. Local CP plans and service delivery models are being developed. Local programs will collaborate with members of local Workforce Advisory Groups (WAGs) to enhance or develop	Need to strengthen partnerships. Pathways either do not exist or are not accessible to clients across the entire state. WAGs are not formed that include all local programs with local community college workforce development, school district CTE programs, and economic development organizations along with other education

	career pathways for client transition to high demand jobs in the state.	and training providers. Articulation agreements are pending.
Community Advisory Committee Workforce Advisory Group (WAG)	Each AEL program has created or is a part of a WAG which will help to guide WIOA activities.	Service Areas are not in sync for the core partners. Some areas are slow to engage all the partners.
Integrated Education & Training	The IET is being piloted in each provider area during the winter semester 2016.	Pilots are not necessarily in high demand jobs. Not all IET courses are engaged with CTE or the college courses. Cost of the vocational instructor is a challenge.
Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education	This area has not been developed yet. We are waiting on more direction from OCTAE on whether training is also required.	In a very rural state it may be difficult to run these programs except in the two largest populated areas or high ELL populated areas.
Transition to Postsecondary	All programs have a transition class to prepare adults to transition to college.	Full alignment of AE courses with readiness to enter credit classes needs analysis for success of preparation class(es). Work with colleges to either establish or expand programs that train individuals in the occupations most needed by Wyoming businesses
Transition to Training or certification programs	Contextualized instruction is being used in AE classes. Workforce awareness, exploration, and interest inventories are employed to better define a career pathway.	Local programs will collaborate with be developing career ladders, career articulated education paths in the high demand jobs areas of the state
Career Pathways	Local programs will collaborate with members of local Workforce Advisory Groups (WAGs) to enhance or develop career pathways for client transition to high demand jobs in the state.	Pathways either do not exist or are not accessible to clients across the entire state. WAGs are not formed that include all local programs with local community college workforce development, school district CTE programs, and economic development

Transition to Employment	Employability skills (social capital skills) are now embedded into all classes using participatory learning strategies. AE students register in Wyoming at Work	organizations along with other education and training providers. Need to enhance communication and build common intake processes. Cross-training of all three core partner staff are needed.
Adult Education and Family Literacy services	Participatory learning strategies, College and Career Readiness standards, and Career Pathways utilizing contextualized learning are now being implemented in all programs. NRS assessments and screenings utilizing PowerPath are also being used.	New StartSmart courses are being developed and implemented across the state. Data is being gathered in action research to demonstrate improvement.
High School Equivalency Certificate Completion	HiSET, TASC, and GED are offered throughout the state as a pathway to complete a high school equivalency. The choice of tests is given to the student. Instruction is geared to the College and Career Readiness Standards and prepares students for any of these tests.	This area improves as each test becomes fully aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards. Full alignment is anticipated by January 2017.
Corrections and Other Institutions Education	Corrections education is provided in jails, institutions, and eligible programs. The Department of Corrections (DOC) is currently run through state funding. Jails and other institutions may be AEFLA or state funded.	Transitional planning between DOC and public AE programs is limited. More integrated training and communication is needed.
Teacher Quality Professional Development	The state fall institute is focused on instructional strategies in one or more of the basic academic areas, partnerships, college and career readiness standards, quality data, and/or continuous program improvement.	More training on disabilities and accommodations is needed. Continued training in Math and Writing is needed to bring up high school equivalency scores and readiness for college or training.

B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

Adult Education has taken a proactive approach to training local staff in educational standards and career pathways. Over the past two years, intensive training on College and Career Readiness Standards and their implementation in the classroom have been completed. Observation rubrics from Standards in Action have been modified and Wyoming specific items have been added. Local directors and/or peers observations of instructors are being piloted as evidence that the standards are satisfactorily used.

Career Pathway Institutes were held, including face-to-face training and webinars, and each program was required to become certified through a nationally recognized trainer for Adult Education Career Pathways. Training was offered to Workforce Services. The certification course included deeper development of a career pathway plan, a service delivery model specific to each community, and a case study following a student through the process. The course was designed to accommodate all student levels including English Language Learners and adults with disabilities.

Innovations by Adult Education program staff to meet both the WIOA law and the needs of rural and isolated communities have increased. One-Stop centers reach out to rural areas, but services are limited. Adult Education instructors often work within communities to help students find “job shadowing” opportunities. Collaboration among the partners allows for good out-reach in isolated areas, but services are different from those available in larger towns or cities.

Adult Education programs are adding a new student success course to assist the student in fully utilizing the services offered in the Adult Education program and to develop employability and social capital skills. This will also help to prepare students to enter the Career Pathways pipeline ready to participate fully as a team member in their learning experience.

WIOA defines youth person as 16 to 24 years of age. The current youth programming collaborative (including the BOOST, SCOPE, and YESS programs) is designed for 16-to 21-year-olds. These three programs may need to be expanded to meet the need.

Challenges faced by workforce development activities include limited funding. Reductions in Federal and state money have made it more difficult to serve the number of individual workers who could qualify for services.

To help overcome the challenge of limited State and Federal funding, the Department of Workforce Services will develop and nurture partnerships among service providers allowing for costs to be spread across various entities and funding streams. During the planning period, the Department and its partners will work with employers to meet job replacement needs in all industries. Also, the Department will work with employers individually and through industry partnerships to identify new employment opportunities. Training and credential attainment efforts will enable workers to become qualified for available jobs.

Because Wyoming is rural, there are fewer approved training providers within the state. This requires individuals to either travel to pursue educational goals, or to enroll in available courses on the Internet. On-line education and training have helped overcome remoteness problems and limited training options in Wyoming. Also, Wyoming’s industry partnerships are focusing on particular

employment opportunities that require training and credential attainment that will enable workers to become qualified for them. This gives greater assurance that the use of available resources will produce desired employment results. The Department also will continue to use on-the-job and Registered Apprenticeship training to place workers in local jobs.

A third challenge is reversing the downward trend in high school graduation and encouraging young people to remain in school. Helping dropouts obtain the required skills and certification to become employable is a closely related challenge. Helping youth to stay in school is being addressed cooperatively through partnership involving Workforce Services and the Wyoming Department of Education, the state's school districts, local schools (including alternative schools), and the higher education system. This includes efforts to help students understand career alternatives and pathways to acquiring job skilled.

Wyoming's Hathaway Scholarships are designed to provide an incentive for Wyoming students to prepare for and pursue post-secondary education within the state. The program offers four merit scholarships, each with specific eligibility requirements. A need-based scholarship supplements merit awards for eligible students. This program is a strong state effort to increase educational attainment while investing in long-term economic diversification. The Department of Education administers the Hathaway Scholarship Program.

The state's efforts to keep youth in school are also assisted through the Department of Workforce Services' summer youth employment program. This program helps young people gain work experience and understand what is needed to prepare for a career. Like the overall Youth Program administered by the Department, the summer youth employment program stresses tutoring, study skills, training, and instruction leading to completion of secondary school. This approach includes dropout prevention strategies and alternative secondary school services as appropriate.

For individuals who have dropped out of school, the agency works with the Adult Education Centers at the state's community colleges to provide assistance and direction in obtaining their high school equivalency certification, and further education. Basic skill testing is done at the colleges and may also be done at the Department's One-Stop centers.

Another challenge involves helping eligible workers who need post-secondary education beyond two years to qualify for career opportunities. The Department takes advantage of opportunities that provide one or two years of post-secondary education for workers so they can qualify for jobs. Most clients who seek help need jobs urgently. However, further post-secondary education can greatly benefit clients in some cases. The issue is complicated somewhat for clients in educational programs that include "hands-on" course components by the fact that Wyoming has fewer post-secondary training providers physically located in the state.

To overcome challenges related to longer-term, post-secondary education needs, workforce specialists will continue to use WIOA resources to pay for tuition, books, and fees for clients. Also, the specialists will continue to refer clients to other agencies or programs for assistance, such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Individuals will be encouraged to apply for FAFSA and Pell funds, that will work cooperatively, or in place of Workforce Services funding. Frequently, clients utilize their Pell & FAFSA awards up front, when a four-year degree is being pursued, and then come back to the American Job Center, during the last two years of their degree, to seek assistance. This is particularly true for adult clients. Youth participants are usually assisted monetarily by the Department of Workforce

Services during the first two years of post-secondary education, depending on the program length. Clients are typically required to report monthly to a Department workforce specialist regarding their educational experience and needs. Grades also are monitored.

Wyoming Department of Education statistics show an average high school dropout rate of just over 5.1 percent for the period of 2009 through 2014, and an average high school graduation rate of 80.5 percent. The high school graduation has trended downward during those years.

As evidenced in the “Economic and Workforce Information Analysis” section of this plan, some segments of Wyoming’s population in particular lack high school diplomas or equivalency. These are older workers, American Indians, black, and Hispanic residents. These groups, in addition to people generally who lack a high school education, will be targeted by the Department of Workforce Services for assistance. While many jobs, including jobs in the mining industry, do not require a high school diploma or high school equivalency, the data still support the Department’s plan to increase diploma and credential attainment. Workers benefit monetarily and in employment retention from increased education.

The Economic and Workforce Information Analysis section projects that in the next 10 years, nearly 32 percent of Wyoming jobs will require a post-secondary education degree or certificate, including most health care and social assistance jobs. A.P. Carnavale, N. Smith and J. Stohl of the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workplace in their June 2010 report , Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018, page 111, state that “62% of all jobs in Wyoming (278,000 jobs) will require some postsecondary training beyond high school in 2018.” Wyoming’s colleges and the state university are not producing enough graduates to keep up with the demand. The Department of Workforce Services, with its partners, plans to continue facilitating postsecondary education for targeted individuals. This includes workers who would not otherwise have the opportunity, or would not take the opportunity for such education, without appropriate guidance and support. Also, as needed, the Department will work with employers, through available programs, initiatives, and the agency’s electronic labor management system, Wyoming at Work, to recruit qualified workers from outside Wyoming to meet the demand for workers.

In the next 10 years, there will be some opportunities for employment in fields of lesser demand and a considerable need to replace workers who have left the state’s workforce. Also, there will be a continuing demand for truck drivers, across multiple industries.

C. State Workforce Development Capacity

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A) above.

The Department of Workforce Services, Employment and Training Division is dedicated to meeting the employment and training needs of Wyoming’s workers and employers in ever-changing economic conditions and is fully capable of providing workforce development activities. To accomplish this, the Division’s plans and activities will be guided by the Employment and Training Team, which is composed of American Job Center managers and program managers. The team serves as the oversight group for all Division policies and procedures, providing unified guidance to staff and partner organizations for service delivery, aligning workforce activities, distributing workload, and

meeting or exceeding performance goals. The program managers are responsible for all of the Division's programs, including WIOA. They provide individual program direction.

The members of the Department of Workforce Services, Employment and Training Division also engage in cross-divisional work to improve customer services. As mentioned earlier in this plan, most of the direct assistance to employers and individuals is provided through the Division's 20 American Job Centers. The American Job Centers, which are located throughout Wyoming, use a One-Stop concept that coordinates the Division's services with services available through partner organizations such as Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Vocational Rehabilitation in a single location, where possible. Where a single location is not possible, the services are effectively coordinated through other means..

The Department of Workforce Services has skilled workforce specialists located at the American Job Centers. These offices provide customers with detailed labor market information necessary to make educated decisions regarding their educational needs, training opportunities, and career goals. Additionally, a statewide system of resources and referral provides:

Well-equipped resource rooms at each American Job Center featuring computers with resume writing software, various books and videos on resume writing and interviewing, college catalogs, typing and spelling tests, and other resource materials.

Regularly scheduled, cost-free workshops at the American Job Centers for resume writing, interviewing techniques, job seeking tips, online job searching, and more.

Interest and aptitude assessment tools for career exploration.

Job training programs that can assist with the cost of additional education and job training for individuals who need to obtain or upgrade skills to enter self-sufficient employment.

Referrals to the Adult Education and Family Literacy program for individualized and group instruction in literacy for eligible learners. Area of study are reading, writing, language, math, and computer skills. English literacy instruction and civics classes are also available for non-English speaking adults and people pursuing U.S. citizenship.

High School Equivalency Certificate testing centers administered through the Wyoming Community College Commission that are responsible for administering high school equivalency tests to youth and adults.

Referrals to Wyoming's community colleges, the University of Wyoming, Registered Apprenticeship, and other vocational training programs.

Referrals to Unemployment Insurance and Vocational Rehabilitation

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all U.S. Department of Labor funded job-training programs, which include WIOA programs. Priority must be provided in the following order:

1. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who have basic skills deficiencies receive top priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
2. Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult funds.
3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

Wyoming realizes the importance of aligning a wide range of publicly and privately funded education, employment, and training programs, while providing high-quality customer service to job seekers, workers, and businesses through the One-Stop delivery system. A job-driven workforce development and service-delivery system is one that results in linking our state's diverse talent pool with specific employer and business needs. Our One-Stop centers continue to be a valuable community resource and an important source of assistance for individuals looking for work, or incumbent workers looking for opportunities to advance their careers. Wyoming is continually working toward aligning workforce, education, and economic development to regional in-demand jobs. This reinforces the partnerships and strategies One-Stop centers provide unemployed job seekers and workers who are underemployed with high-quality career services, education and training, and supportive services to obtain and retain good jobs. The centers also help businesses with finding skilled workers, as well as retaining workers they have by providing ongoing education and training opportunities to upgrade worker skills.

All American Job Centers throughout Wyoming offer basic career services, individualized career services, and training services for Wyoming's adult, dislocated worker, and youth. This includes groups such as veterans, public assistance recipients, individuals with disabilities, older workers, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, unemployed and underemployed workers, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act certified workers, and anyone else needing workforce related assistance. WIOA, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, Wagner-Peyser services, and National Emergency Grant programs, when utilized, will be provided through the Employment and Training Division by merit-based public employees, in coordination with other organizations both within the American Job Centers and the communities served.

Individual Intake Example:

An individual enters the American Job Center and is greeted by staff and asked what brings them into the job center today. The client will state whether they are looking for work, needing to file for unemployment, has employer complaints, etc. The initial staff person will then direct the individual to the respective person to talk to in the job center. Unemployment Insurance is based out of Casper, Wyoming and all American Job Centers have a direct line to the Unemployment Insurance Division for clients and employers to use at their convenience. Workers Compensation forms are readily available online and in job centers and depending on the job center Workers' Compensation employee(s) are available for assistance. Clients are asked to self-identify if they are a Veteran and a checklist is used to identify if the individual has significant barriers to employment and if present are directed to speak with a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program

specialist. Priority of service for veterans is used from that point on if the client identifies as a veteran. When an individual has employment needs (resume assistance, finding employment, interview skills, etc.) they are directed to meet with a staff member who then will work to uncover the needs of the individual including: what type of work they have done, what work they are looking for, does the individual have marketable skills, if the individual needs education assistance, etc.

General assistance is provided to all job seekers in the American Job Center and educational services are provided to those members that meet established criteria. WIOA services are provided to those qualified populations that need training in an in-demand occupation, determined by labor market information for the state. Should additional service needs present along the journey of placing job seekers with employers, partner programs which can facilitate the needs of the individual are contacted and the individual works with these programs to meet their needs (e.g. clothing, housing, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, healthcare, legal assistance, etc.). If an individual is discovered to have specific needs/disabilities that prevent them from participating in WIOA services, the individual is directed to Vocational Rehabilitation to have their barriers ascertained and services provided. Individuals who do not need additional services are helped in the process of applying for work, interviewing, and gaining employment. In Wyoming, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has worked collaboratively with core partners to address economic and workforce delivery system issues. But opportunities exist for strengthening the alignment of existing resources to demand-side needs. Amendments to the Division's program made by WIOA are designed to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities through unified strategic planning requirements, common performance accountability measures, and requirements governing the One-Stop delivery system.

Core services are also available through a wide variety of options. Our job exchange software, Wyoming at Work, allows for 24 hour service to job seekers looking for work in Wyoming and employers looking for employees in Wyoming. Direct links are available to individuals who need to contact any of our state agencies; Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, Labor Standards, Department of Family Services, etc. Every effort is made to extend services to individuals and employers outside of business hours.

Employer Intake Example:

Employers entering/contacting the American Job Center are also greeted and their needs are ascertained. Should an employer need to post a position for employees a staff member will assist. This process includes verification that the employer is in good standing with Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance, creating an employer profile, posting the position, notifying veterans and non-veterans of this position, and follow-up with the employer. Many of the American Job Centers in Wyoming are outfitted with auditors who can assist with Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance related employer questions. The Department of Workforce Services will continue to provide labor market information to employers through its American Job Centers, and through Wyoming at Work, an internet based system. Wyoming at Work allows employers to post job openings to recruit workers. Employers are trained and encouraged to use the Wyoming at Work self-service system. Through Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and other programs, American Job Center business representatives will establish working relationships with employers to ascertain their needs for workers, solve workforce related issues, create work opportunities, and refer eligible customers to position openings.

b. State Strategic Vision and Goals

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

1. Vision

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

Wyoming's workforce development system will be fundamental in supporting robust regional and state economies and in producing a high-quality workforce valued by Wyoming employers.

2. Goals

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the above analysis of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

GOAL 1: Ensure Wyoming employers have access to a skilled, high-quality workforce in today's changing economy

1.1: Engage the business community and align education and workforce training opportunities with the needs of Wyoming employers.

1.2 Ensure training is predicated upon a labor market need by using employer feedback, labor market information, and sector strategy input.

1.3 Expand efforts to recruit and retain workers.

Strategies:

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council Executive Committee shall focus on the state's most significant short- and long-term workforce development priorities that should inform the full Board's priorities (1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

Create, foster, and expand sector strategies based upon input provided by employers and data provided by Wyoming Research and Planning (1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

A sector strategy subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall oversee sector strategy activities and identify new industries that need sector strategies (1.1,1.2).

Organize and host the annual Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit to further develop relationships with employers and furnish them with information related to the services of the workforce development system (1.1).

Quarterly supply-and-demand labor market information reports shall be provided to the Workforce Development Council (1.2).

Cultivate partnerships between sector strategies and apprenticeship programs (1.1).

Continue to strengthen the Wyoming Grown program with targeted marketing efforts to recruit Wyoming natives back to the state (1.3).

Work with economic development entities to develop practices aimed at retaining workers (1.1, 1.3).

GOAL 2: Ensure all Wyoming people who want to work have access to an open, streamlined, and effective workforce development system

2.1 Maximize core program coordination.

2.2 Utilize Career Pathways as an umbrella model in One-Stop centers.

2.3 Evaluate efforts to ensure that training and education requirements match the state's labor market needs.

2.4 Work to reduce barriers to employment for underrepresented populations.

Strategies:

Develop a marketing plan to create awareness about services offered by One-Stop centers (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

To ensure accountability and transparency of funding, core programs shall provide a joint annual report to the Workforce Development Council which demonstrates administrative-to-program costs and program performance to help the Council identify opportunities for fund allocation (2.1).

A Career Pathways subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall be formed to oversee the development of Career Pathways activities (2.1, 2.2).

Labor market analysis and the needs communicated by employers should inform ongoing One-Stop system planning and development (2.2, 2.3).

Employer education efforts regarding the benefits of hiring underrepresented workforce populations should be expanded (2.4).

Continue to develop and enhance programs that incentivize employment of underrepresented workforce populations (2.4).

Utilize integrated training and education programs as a way to more efficiently move adults in need of literacy skills or high school equivalency certificates into the workplace (2.4).

GOAL 3: Prepare all Wyoming youth to be both career and college ready

3.1 Work with Governor's policy teams to enhance efforts to improve communication, coordination, and collaboration in preparing youth for post-secondary studies or the world of work.

3.2 Incorporate a Career Pathways system as a model to better guide young people.

3.3 Incorporate pre-apprenticeship programs to offer young people opportunities to gain technical skills that are best learned on the job.

3.4 Disseminate information regarding future in-demand labor market needs.

Strategies:

Promote career exploration through Career Pathways so young people can acquire educational, technical, and social skills that enhance career development (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4).

Work with education partners and stakeholders to develop assessment tools and information regarding Career Pathways to youth (3.1, 3.2).

Provide opportunities for employers and industry representatives to connect with young people (3.1, 3.3).

Develop pre-apprenticeship strategies with the Wyoming Office of Registered Apprenticeship to foster a future pipeline of skilled workers (3.3).

Create a communication outreach method that targets youth, parents, educators, and other stakeholders (3.1).

Using labor market information and input from the business community, communicate future labor market needs to community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and other training entities and stakeholders (3.4)

Certificate and Associate of Applied Sciences completion

Governor Mead made the decision that Wyoming would join the Complete College America's Alliance of States initiated effort in November 2012 and named the core members of a Complete College Wyoming Team. The Wyoming community colleges and the University of Wyoming (UW) have set the following college completion goals in support of the Complete College Wyoming effort to increase college completion significantly at the community colleges and UW by 2022:

The community college goal, established by Complete College Wyoming in October 2013, is to increase community college certificate and associate degree recipients by 5 percent annually, with a base year of 2011-12 and a period of 10 years ending in 2021-22. This goal was approved by the Wyoming Community College Commission in October 2013.

The UW President and UW Board of Trustees support the goal to increase the number of baccalaureate degrees conferred at UW by 2 percent annually (base year of 2011-2012) in the academic year 2016-2017 and ending in the academic year 2021-2022.

Community colleges are committed to increasing certificate and associate of applied science degrees as part of this ambitious goal.

3. Performance Goals

Using the table provided in Appendix 1, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

See Appendix 1. All numbers are estimates based on our experience with WIA. Estimates were based on numbers from differing quarters than what WIOA requires. These numbers may be adjusted based upon further guidance from our federal partners and upon the final WIOA rules.

4. Assessment

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council will utilize the Labor Market Information/Research & Planning Division, data extracted from Wyoming@Work, and other data management systems on a quarterly basis to ensure that the core programs are meeting to goals described in Sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) above. Such reports shall be presented to the Council at each quarterly meeting.

c. State Strategy

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

1. Describe the Strategies the State Will Implement, Including Industry or Sector Partnerships Related to In-demand Industry Sectors and Occupations and Career Pathways, as Required by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(b), (d). "career Pathway" is Defined at WIOA Section 3(7). "in-demand Industry Sector or Occupation" is Defined at WIOA Section 3(23).

Knowledge, skills, and abilities requirements of the top 20 growth occupations

This section briefly discusses the knowledge, skills, and abilities workers must possess to perform adequately the duties associated with the top 20 growth occupations. Table 4–1 shows the total growth; average annual wage; educational requirements; and the knowledge, skills, and abilities for Wyoming's top 20 projected growth occupations for the period 2012–2022. Identifying the educational knowledge and skills requirements necessary to perform a particular occupation is essential to ensuring employment and training activities match occupation compatibility. Fixable skill gaps also can be identified. For example, if a participant possesses all the abilities required for a job except for oral expression, then public speaking classes may provide a solution.

Table 4–1: Growth, Average Annual Wage, Educational Requirement, and Top 5 Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) for Wyoming's Top 20 Projected Growth Occupations

Growth Rank	SOC Code	Occupation	Total Growth	Average Annual Wage	Education	KSA Rank	Knowledge	Skills	Ability
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1	41-2301	Retail Salespersons	1053	\$26,480	High School or Less	1 3	2 4	Customer and Personal Service Sales and Marketing English Language Mathematics	Active Listening Persuasion Speaking Service Orientation Negotiation	Oral Comprehension Oral Expression Speech Clarity Speech Recognition Near Vision
2	35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	951	\$18,220	High School or Less	1 2 4	3	Customer and Personal Service English Language Food Preparation Mathematics	Service Orientation Speaking Coordination Monitoring	Oral Comprehension Speech Recognition Oral Expression Speech Clarity Information Ordering
3	29-1141	Registered Nurses	881	\$61,480	Associate's Degree	1 2 3 5	4	Medicine and Dentistry Customer and Personal Service Psychology English Language Education	Active Listening Social Perceptiveness Service Orientation Speaking	Oral Comprehension Oral Expression Problem Sensitivity Deductive Reasoning

								and Training	Coordinati on	Inductive Reasoning
4	53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Tr ailer Truck Drivers	820	\$46,350	Some College or Certificatio n	1 3 4	2	Transporta tion Public Safety and Security Customer and Personal Service English Language Mechanical	Operation and Control Operation Monitoring Time Manageme nt Critical Thinking Monitoring	Control Precision Far Vision Reaction Time
5	39-9021	Personal Care Aides	809	\$22,630	High School or Less	1 3	2 4	Customer and Personal Service English Language Psychology	Service Orientatio n Social Perceptive ness Active Listening Speaking Monitoring	Oral Comprehe nsion Oral Expression Problem Sensitivity Deductive Reasoning Near Vision
6	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	801	\$95,560	Bachelor's Degree	1 2 3 4 5		Administra tion and Manageme nt Customer and Personal Service Personnel	Active Listening Reading Comprehe nsion Speaking Critical	Oral Comprehe nsion Oral Expression Problem Sensitivity Written Comprehe

								and Human Resources Economics and Accounting Mathemati cs	Thinking Monitoring	nsion Written Expression
7	47-2031	Carpenters	798	\$40,900	High School or Less	1 3 5	2 4	Building and Constructi on Mathemati cs English Language Mechanical Design	Active Listening Monitoring Speaking Active Learning Complex Problem Solving	Manual Dexterity Problem Sensitivity Trunk Strength Visualizati on Informatio n Ordering
8	49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	708	\$56,600	High School or Less	1 3 4	2 5	Mechanical Engineerin g and Technolog y Production and Processing English Language Mathemati cs	Equipment Maintenan ce Repairing Operation Monitoring Troublesh ooting Operation and Control	Arm-hand Steadiness Manual Dexterity Control Precision Finger Dexterity Multilimb Coordinati on
9	43-3031	Bookkeepi ng, Accounting , and	678	\$36,430	High School or Less	1 3 5	2 4	Clerical Mathemati cs English	Active Listening Reading Comprehe	Oral Comprehe nsion Written

		Auditing Clerks						Language Economics and Accounting Customer and Personal Service	nsion Speaking Critical Thinking Mathemati cs	Comprehe nsion Written Expression Mathemati cal Reason Near Vision
10	47-2061	Constructi on Laborers	660	\$32,460	High School or Less	1 2 4 5	3	Building and Constructi on Mechanical Administra tion and Manageme nt Public Safety and Security Mathemati cs	Active Listening Coordinati on Operation Monitoring Reading Comprehe nsion Social Perceptive ness	Manual Dexterity Arm-hand Steadiness Multilimb Coord. Static Strength Control Precision
11	43-6014	Secretaries and Administra tive Assistants, Except Legal, Medical and Executive	\$33,440	High School or Less	1 3 4 5	2	Clerical English Language Customer and Personal Service Computers and Electronics Administra tion and	Writing Oral Comprehe nsion Reading Comprehe nsion Near Vision Time Manageme nt	Service Orientatio n Written Comprehe nsion Coordinati on Written Expression	

						Manageme nt		Oral Expression		
12	47-1011	First-Line Supervisor s of Constructi on Trades and Extraction Workers	580	\$65,890	High School or Less	1 2 3 4 5		Production and Processing Building and Constructi on Customer and Personal Service Administra tion and Manageme nt Mechanical	Active Listening Oral Comprehe nsion Coordinati on Oral Expression Critical Thinking Problem Sensitivity	Speaking Informatio n Ordering Manageme nt of Personnel Near Vision
13	31-1014	Nursing Assistants	548	\$27,750	Some College or Certificatio n	1 2 4 5	3	Customer and Personal Service English Language Psychology Medicine and Dentistry Public Safety and Security	Service Orientatio n Active Listening Social Perceptive ness Coordinati on Monitoring	Oral Comprehe nsion Problem Sensitivity Near Vision Oral Expression Speech Recognitio n

14	37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	545	\$20,060	High School or Less	1 2		Customer and Personal Service English Language	Service Orientation Coordination	Extent Flexibility Trunk Strength Stamina Information Ordering Near Vision
15	37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	536	\$27,520	High School or Less	1 2		Customer and Personal Service English Language	Active Listening	Near Vision Oral Comprehension Static Strength Trunk Strength Extent Flexibility
16	49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	476	\$41,660	High School or Less	1 3 4 5	2	Mechanical Building and Construction Customer and Personal Service Public Safety and Security English Language	Equipment Maintenance Repairing Troubleshooting Critical Thinking Equipment Selection	Arm-Hand Steadiness Manual Dexterity Near Vision Information Ordering Problem Sensitivity

17	35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	459	\$22,590	High School or Less	1	2	Food Production Production and Processing	Coordinati on Monitoring Active Listening	Problem Sensitivity Arm-Hand Steadiness Informatio n Ordering Manual Dexterity Speech Clarity
18	43-9061	Office Clerks, General	457	\$30,400	High School or Less	1 3	2	Clerical Customer and Personal Service English Language	Active Listening Reading Comprehe nsion Speaking Social Perceptive ness Time Manageme nt	Oral Comprehe nsion Oral Expression Speech Clarity Written Comprehe nsion Speech Recognitio n
19	35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	432	\$18,050	High School or Less	1 3	2	Customer and Personal Service Food Production English Language	Active Listening Service Orientatio n Social Perceptive ness Speaking Coordinati on	Oral Comprehe nsion Oral Expression Speech Recognitio n Speech Clarity

										Arm-Hand Steadiness
20	47-2111	Electricians	420	\$53,710	High School or Less	1 2 4	3 5	Building and Construction Mechanical Mathematics Design English Language	Troubleshooting Repairing Active Listening Critical Thinking Judgement and Decision Making	Problem Sensitivity Deductive Reasoning Inductive Reasoning Near Vision Oral Comprehension

Sources: Research & Planning, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

Examining demographics of the Wyoming labor force (e.g. age and educational attainment level) and long-term employment projections by industry and occupation provides insights into job openings that may provide gainful employment for job-training participants. Examining the education, knowledge, skills, and abilities required for these jobs enables those involved with job-training programs to identify occupations that fit a participant's capabilities and helps identify potential skill gaps that can be rectified with these job-training programs.

At this time, Wyoming apprenticeship occupations are more traditional in nature. Such jobs include lineman, electrician, plumber, HVAC, meter repairer, carpenter, sheet metal worker, iron worker, stationary engineer, operating engineer, cement mason, welder, truck driver, construction equipment mechanic, machinist, instrument technician (utilities), powerhouse mechanic, chemical laboratory technician, gas-main fitter, hydroelectric station operator, power plant operator, powerhouse electrician, process technology and substation technician. There is movement toward development in nontraditional programs like police officer, certified medical assistants, and culinary and hospitality workers.

Wyoming's economy continues to recover from the Great Recession. However, the state's boom-bust cycles are a constant reminder of the need to prepare the state's workforce for the economic downturns that inevitably return. Education and training assistance is a key factor for withstanding layoffs, especially for people more likely to have less than a high school diploma -- American Indians, blacks, and Hispanics. Other people also should be targeted for assistance as needed.

Another area of concern, as demonstrated by Research and Planning data, is Wyoming's youth. It is imperative that efforts be expanded to increase this group's involvement in employment. Providing "soft skills" through work experience is a key factor. Another important step is providing quality education for jobs that will provide a livable wage in occupations where openings are projected.

Strategies for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to meet performance goals are as follows:

- Strengthen the alignment of the Division program with the other core programs through a unified strategic plan, common performance accountability measures, and delivery of services through the One-Stop model.
- Continuing to emphasize the achievement of competitive integrated employment by individuals with disabilities through the Employment First Initiative.
- Expanding services to support students and youth with disabilities who are transitioning from secondary education to postsecondary education and employment.

Adult Education services cover the basic academic skills. Many of the employability and social capital skills such as speaking and listening, persuasion, critical thinking, comprehension, management and organizing information, problem-solving, and teamwork are embedded in the instructional strategies in our classrooms. Contextualized instruction also makes the information more applicable to the career path they have chosen.

English Language Learners receive knowledge and skills in addition to learning about the culture and work environment of our country. English and civics education also allows for integrated education and training activities. Some of our English Language Learners have degrees from their own countries, and this program may offer the best solution for training or transitioning to postsecondary education.

Out-of-school youth, including youth with disabilities, have the opportunity in some communities to be part of the BOOST, SCOPE, or YESS programs. These are collaborations between the Adult Education and Workforce Services youth programs. Career Pathways, high school equivalency completion, transitioning into postsecondary education, skills training or apprenticeships help this population successfully enter employment.

Wyoming community colleges provide Career and Technical Education certificate and associate of applied science programs in preparation for our clients to directly enter the workforce after certificate or degree completion. These partners employ strategies to reduce barriers to college completion, including helping students set education and training goals, increasing access to resources and courses required and gaining self-direction habits.

Streamlining the path for clients who need to upgrade their communication, writing and reading skills is also occurring. Collectively, this set of initiatives is called the “guided pathway to success.”

Career Pathway Development

The Career Pathways planning system is being developed with the definition in WIOA as our basis.

WIOA Sec. 3 Definition (7)

CAREER PATHWAY.—The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high–quality education, training, and other services that—

(A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;

(B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act/of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an “apprenticeship,” except in section 171);

(C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;

(D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or

occupational cluster;

(E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement

of the individual to the extent practicable;

(F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and

(G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Strategies:

Wyoming intends to create service area Career Pathways plans. WIOA core partners, businesses, K–12 education and community college representatives, career and technical education representatives, economic development officials when possible, and other agency representatives would be part of Workforce Advisory Groups in the service areas.

A Career Pathway plan consists of the following 11 required components.

1. Partnerships and alignment, which clarify roles, responsibilities, partner engagement and contributions, funding needs and resources, and labor market information.
2. Promotion and creation of Career Pathways culture and environment – aligning policies, and programs to address employment needs.
3. Individual student education and career plans.
4. Ongoing assessment.

5. Career advising and counseling.
6. Designing instructional and training services, including contextualized participatory learning.
7. Wrap-around support services that reduce barriers and increase student persistence.
8. Student Data management, including intake through final performance measurement.
9. Annual monitoring, including self-assessment and state monitoring.
10. Professional development for all Adult Education staff and cross training of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act core partner staff.
11. Educational programming provided.

Many elements will need to be developed among the relevant stakeholders. There is a need to develop accelerated and targeted services driven by local workforce needs, job growth projections integrated into the education and training models, and articulation agreements that form a seamless system. Local Adult Education programs are using a draft version of the plan for their initial stages but it will need to be expanded to include all the elements described. Meaningful career pathways will depend upon deliberate collaboration and constant communication among the local core partner and stakeholder groups, called Workforce Advisory Groups. The plans would be submitted as part of the request-for-proposal process in Adult Education. These plans would be reviewed through WIOA core partners or a subcommittee of the State Workforce Investment Board for alignment with the state plan.

2. Describe the Strategies the State Will Use to Align the Core Programs, Any Combined State Plan Partner Programs Included in This Plan, Required and Optional One-stop Partner Programs, and Any Other Resources Available to the State to Achieve Fully Integrated Customer Services Consistent with the Strategic Vision and Goals Described Above. Also Describe Strategies to Strengthen Workforce Development Activities in Regard to Weaknesses Identified in Section II(a)(2).

Through the One-Stop system, Wyoming will integrate services for youth and adults with and without barriers to ensure all Wyomingites are provided with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve gainful, meaningful employment. Wyoming's partners within workforce development, education, and employment will provide integrated and comprehensive, wraparound services to include access to basic literacy, postsecondary education, career and technical education, apprenticeship, and employment opportunities.

The partners will work with and request feedback from employers, use data to identify skill gaps for training purposes, recruit and retain Wyoming's home-grown talent, and develop sector strategies (industry partnerships) to ensure employer needs are met while and helping to diversify Wyoming's economy.

One way to accomplish this is through Registered Apprenticeship programs. Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven model and a proven workforce solution for businesses/sponsors to recruit and train highly-skilled workers. The apprenticeship model allows businesses to customize worker training, resulting in a workforce that is fully proficient and trained to their specifications.

Businesses/sponsors that use Registered Apprenticeship reduce worker turnover, increase productivity, and improve the bottom line. In our diploma oriented culture, Registered Apprentice programs also provide a nationally recognized document of completion.

Another strategy being developed to align core programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are Career Pathways plans, which aligns services, helps reduce or eliminate duplication of services, and strengthens the state and local partnerships. Delivering Career Pathways services will also align some of the local Workforce Advisory Groups.

III. Operational Planning Elements

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that support the State's strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II.(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

a. State Strategy Implementation

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

1. State Board Functions

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e. provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

Governor Mead has revised the duties of the Wyoming Workforce Development Council (the state workforce investment board) in Executive Order 2015-5 to include the provisions of WIOA and includes enhancing workforce development activities that help diversity Wyoming's economy, creating a strategic plan not less than once every four years, developing and adopting operating rules for itself, and developing a yearly budget for itself.

The Board has identified one staff member to coordinate its activities on a quarterly basis or on an as-needed basis and shall partner with the Operations Team continually to ensure the continuity of transition from the Workforce Investment Act to the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act.

Wyoming has developed its Operations Team, which consists of the Department of Workforce Services representatives, to include Vocational Rehabilitation, program managers for Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Agriculture, and Veterans services, the Wyoming Community College Commission, Adult Education program manager and a representative from Research and Planning. This team will facilitate and coordinate all research, report data, analysis, and recommendations associated with operations, and provide regular updates to the Wyoming Workforce Development Council about progress being made in aligning programs.

Costs associated with the Operations Team shall be provided from each team member's budget.

2. Implementation of State Strategy

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

A. Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies.

Wyoming's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs are administered by the Employment and Training Division, within the Office of Workforce Programs, of the Department of Workforce Services. Most of the direct assistance to employers and individuals are provided through the Division's 20 American Job Centers. In this plan, the terms are used interchangeably. The American Job Centers, which are located throughout Wyoming, use a One-Stop concept that coordinates the Division's services with services available through partner organizations in a single location, where possible. Where a single location is not possible, the services are effectively coordinated through other means.

All American Job Centers throughout Wyoming are required to offer basic career services, individualized career services, and training services for Wyoming's adult, dislocated worker, and youth workforces, including veterans, public assistance recipients, individuals with disabilities, older workers, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, unemployed and underemployed workers, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act certified workers, and anyone else needing assistance. WIOA, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, and Wagner-Peyser services, and National Emergency Grant programs when utilized, will be provided through the Employment and Training Division by state merit-based employees, in coordination with organizations both in the American Job Centers and the communities served.

Basic career services will be offered to workers through the Wagner-Peyser program, which are available in person and electronically through the Wyoming at Work system. In-person services include assistance with job registration through the Wyoming at Work system, resume preparation and repository, job matching, labor market information, skills testing, and career planning. Priority of service, enforced through Federal and state policies, will be provided at all centers.

Staff-assisted services, including WIOA individualized career services and training, are also available at the American Job Centers. These services are coordinated with other programs, both within and outside the American Job Centers. Through the centers, workers will also have access to many other services provided by the Department of Workforce Services, including access to the unemployment insurance system.

The Department uses workforce information, including economic and labor market data provided through its Research and Planning Division, for planning and decision making. This information is critical in determining the department's target industries/occupations, in working with the agency's partners in business and education, and for ensuring appropriate matching of job openings and skill development.

Partner programs and organizations are jointly responsible for Wyoming's economic development, and so collaborate to create a seamless, customer-focused workforce development and One-Stop delivery system. This integrated service delivery system improves access to a variety of educational, training, and workforce programs, all having a common goal of an economically self-sufficient workforce for Wyoming. Five of the six core programs are co-located under the Department of Workforce Services as required under WIOA: Title I Adult Program, Title I Dislocated Worker Program, Title I Youth Program, Title III Wagner-Peyser Program, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Many locations also include other partner programs such as the Veterans Program, Senior Community Services Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Workers' Compensation, and Job Corps. The sixth core program, Adult Education and Family Literacy, resides in the Community College Commission. All six core programs and many partner programs make up the One-Stop delivery system in Wyoming.

The Department of Workforce Services has skilled, state merit employees (workforce specialists) located at 20 American Job Centers statewide that provide customers with detailed labor market information necessary to make educated decisions regarding their educational needs, training opportunities, and career goals. Additionally, a statewide system of resources and referral provides:

- Well-equipped resource rooms within each American Job Center featuring computers with resume writing software, various books and videos on resume writing and interviewing, college catalogs, typing and spelling tests, and other resource materials.
- Regularly scheduled, cost-free workshops at the American Job Centers for resume writing, interviewing techniques, job search tips, online job searching, and more.
- Interest and aptitude assessment tools for career exploration.
- Job-training programs that can assist with the cost of additional education and job training for individuals who need to obtain or upgrade skills to enter self-sufficient employment.
- Referrals to Adult Education and Family Literacy programs for individualized and group instruction in literacy for eligible learners. Areas of study include: reading, writing, language, math, and computer skills. English literacy instruction and civics classes are also available for non-English speaking adults and those pursuing U.S. citizenship.
- High school equivalency certificate testing centers administered through the Wyoming Community College Commission that are responsible for administering the high school equivalency tests to youth and adults.
- Referral to Wyoming's community colleges, the University of Wyoming, Registered Apprenticeship, and other vocational training programs.
- Collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to meet the workforce needs of individuals with disabilities.

Adult Education and Family Literacy (Title II of WIOA) funds Adult Education programs across the state of Wyoming. These programs actively recruit eligible adults age 16 years and older who are not required to attend K-12 public education and are in need of basic

academic skills improvement, English language acquisition, or completion of a high school equivalency certificate. Literacy, adult education, adult secondary education, and English language acquisition services are provided.

Each provider is funded to establish or operate programs that provide Adult Education and literacy activities, including programs that provide the activities concurrently. Allowable activities under WIOA include:

- Adult Education and literacy activities;
- Workplace Adult Education and literacy activities;
- Family Literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that,
 - o provides Adult Education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 - o Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Alignment across the core programs is designed within each provider's Career Pathways plan. A service delivery plan is included in the plan that describes:

- Career pathway environment
- Career assessments
- Career exploration
- Occupational short-term growth in the area
- Student career plans
- Employer engagement
- Transition planning
- Use of technology

- Initial intake activities may include core partner presentations on available services and an opportunity to make appointments or ask questions of representatives. The satellite or outreach areas may have a modified schedule or method of providing information.

Common intake forms have not been developed as of this writing but are planned. There is no co-enrollment software at this time; however, a number of software packages are available. A request for co-enrollment software information and/or proposals is planned once funding sources are identified.

B. Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities. Wyoming Workforce Development Council

The Council acts as the State Workforce Investment Board for Wyoming. All Department of Workforce Services programs are coordinated with the Council while focusing on adult, dislocated worker, and youth target populations.

Industry partnership solutions

The Governor, Wyoming Workforce Development Council, and Department of Workforce Services understand that many workforce concerns throughout the state are unique to certain industry sectors and clusters. As a result, they support industry partnership collaborations that bring together employers and employees around the common purpose of improving the competitiveness of a sector. Together, they address development, recruitment, and retention challenges. In addition to advancing industry partnerships, the Council and the Department will continue to release request-for-proposals to support initiatives advancing alternative and renewable energy training, and supporting economically disadvantaged individuals in reaching self-sufficiency.

Registered Apprenticeship

Coordination may involve the following steps:

1. The Office of Apprenticeship educating all entities, continually, until the Workforce Services and colleges are proficient and ready to partner with the Office of Apprenticeship to offer Registered Apprenticeship as an option to employers to meet their workforce needs.
2. The Office of Apprenticeship, Workforce Services, and the colleges need to collaborate on a regular basis to ensure we are working effectively, sharing new information, discussing concerns, and continuing forward momentum.
3. Core partners continually monitors the training needs of businesses during need of trained new staff and new businesses moving into Wyoming.

Wyoming Department of Family Services

The Department of Family Services administers state programs that serve families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance, including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). The Department of Workforce Services partners with this organization on programs such as WIOA, the TANF Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities (POWER) program, and the Dads Making a Difference program. Both departments afford funding for the services provided. The two departments also partner through TANF and Employment and Training Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Programs to serve low-income customers referred to Workforce Services.

Wyoming Department of Education

The Department of Education's target populations includes students who are reading below grade level and at-risk sub-groups (i.e. students with disabilities). At the middle/junior/senior high levels, the Department helps students stay in school through engagement and a rigorous academic approach, internships, and appropriate job or work experiences during the school day. Also, the Education Department provides leadership opportunities, peer-to-peer mentoring, and career technical education.

Community College Commission

The mission of the Wyoming Community College Commission is "to provide dynamic lifelong learning environment through higher education, workforce development, innovative partnerships, that lead to responsible citizenship, and economic, social, and cultural prosperity."

The commission's Adult Education program has worked closely with Workforce Services to help adults and out-of-school youth achieve basic educational College Commission goals. The seven Wyoming community colleges' each have a workforce development division that works closely with the Adult Education program, both of which will continue to partner with local stakeholders and Workforce Advisory Groups on development of career pathways.

University of Wyoming

The Department of Workforce Services relies on the university primarily as a resource for research and special projects. It works with the Office of Research and Economic Development.

Wyoming Economic Development Association (WEDA) and Local Economic Development Organizations

The goal of economic development is to increase the state's tax base and provide better jobs, thus enhancing the well-being and prosperity of the citizens of Wyoming. Workforce Services relies on these organizations for information and assistance with local developments of mutual interest.

Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division

Like WEDA and other economic development units, the Department of Workforce Services relies on its Economic Analysis Division for information. The Department obtains regular economic reports and demographic information from this agency.

Wyoming Workforce Alliance

The Wyoming Business Council, Wyoming Community College Commission, University of Wyoming, Department of Education, and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services formed a partnership to address workforce development issues at a state level. The Wyoming Workforce Alliance, established in fall 2002, aims to improve access to short-term training, and develop the competencies and work-readiness skills that Wyoming's workers need to obtain employment and advance in today's job market. Also, the group responds to employers' need by connecting them with qualified employees.

Chambers of commerce

One-Stop centers work with chamber personnel throughout the state. This is a key partnership for information dissemination and for strengthening Wyoming's business climate.

Wyoming Department of Corrections

Workforce Services coordinates with the Department of Corrections to provide re-entry workforce readiness, and education services for ex-offenders, both in prison within the pre-release category, as well as those already located within communities.

Job Corps

Workforce Services assists Job Corps in helping individuals who cannot find and/or maintain employment, youth who did not achieve success in high school, or young people who can't afford college. Job Corps serves individuals ages 16 to 24 through education and training. Workforce Services and Job Corps work together to offer education programs for youth and young adults, with the purpose of obtaining a high school diploma, GED, and technical skills, while preparing for employment.

Local school districts and secondary schools

Wyoming has 48 school districts that govern secondary schools, including alternative schools for at-risk youth. Workforce Services partners with these districts to serve program-eligible youth. This also includes providing transition services to eligible students with disabilities and others in need.

Small Business Development Centers

The centers are located in several Wyoming communities. Workforce Services partners with the centers when working with clients on how to open a business and write a business plan.

Experience Works

The Department of Workforce Services partners with Experience Works through the Senior Community Service Employment Program to help older workers obtain unsubsidized employment. Program management is located within the Department.

Northwest Community Action Programs of Wyoming (NOWCAP)

NOWCAP, a private, non-profit community action agency, investigates problems posed by insufficient incomes and inadequate economic opportunities, with the intent of developing coordinated solutions. NOWCAP provides innovative services to people with developmental disabilities and brain injuries throughout Wyoming. It currently has offices in Casper, Cody, Worland and Rock Springs. Department of Workforce Services partners with NOWCAP to provide Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and referral services according to individual needs.

During the Career Pathways planning process, Workforce Advisory Group participants consider duplication of services and establish a service delivery system that will be efficient and effective for mutual clients. A process for unemployed Adult Education and Family Literacy program students to register with the Wyoming at Work system is in place.

More planning is needed at the State and local levels to more fully integrate Career and Technical Education into the Integrated Education and Training model. Workforce Services, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education will develop guidance for local application of this model.

Wyoming Independent Living and Wyoming Services for Independent Living

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation collaborates with these programs to help individuals with disabilities and students with disabilities overcome any barriers to independent living, including employment.

C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services to individuals including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B). The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services

In order to achieve workforce success in Wyoming, partnerships are of paramount importance. They open doors, help organizations leverage funding, and facilitate desired outcomes, thus enabling government at all levels to serve its citizens.

The Employment and Training Division administers a variety of Federal and State programs and systems, through its American Job Centers, which serve unique segments of Wyoming's population. The Division's primary goals, in these programs, are to help eligible individuals and families address employment and training needs and obtain life skills, which will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency and increased earnings.

WIOA will partner with many of the Division programs to accomplish these goals. Programs that we will coordinate with are Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Veterans Employment and Training Services, Dads Making a Difference, Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities, Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers and the Monitor Advocate System, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Federal Bonding, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance programs (Employment and Training), and the Senior Community Service Employment Program. In addition to those that have been mentioned, Workforce Services will partner with numerous other organizations and programs, at the State, local and Federal levels, to determine workforce strategies and carry out activities.

Among the Division's partners are: the Vocational Rehabilitation, Unemployment Insurance, Enforcement, Research and Planning, and Quality Assurance divisions of the Department of Workforce Services; various agencies within Employment and Training Administration; Wyoming Department of Family Services; the Social Security Administration; Wyoming Department of Corrections and related service providers; Veteran's Administration; and Job Corps. Educational and skill-attainment entities include the Wyoming Department of Education, Community College Commission and local colleges, the University of Wyoming, Wyoming's secondary schools and local school districts, and other educational providers. Others are the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Analysis Division; chambers of commerce; and drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers; and other clinics.

These partnerships are critical in offsetting the dwindling resources available through WIOA and achieving the goals of the Department and the Employment and Training Division. The ongoing challenge is to obtain cooperation and funding from multiple sources that have similar aims and objectives so more people and organizations to be served. These partnering efforts are described briefly in the following discussion.

One of Wyoming's workforce goals is to encourage local communities and their stakeholders to invest and become involved in workforce strategies. This is facilitated by partnerships that the Employment and Training Division and Workforce Services Department have with the Wyoming Workforce Development Council and the Youth Council. These organizations work with employers both individually and through industry partnerships to identify new employment opportunities. Training and credential attainment are planned as part of these efforts, to enable workers to become qualified for available job opportunities. Through industry partnerships, Workforce Services and the Workforce Development Council will bring together employers, employees, economic development entities, training programs, local American Job Centers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders. This will be done with the common purpose of improving the competitiveness of an economic sector by addressing development, recruitment, and retention challenges. Wyoming has fostered a number of these partnerships and will continue to do so. Industrial partnerships will play a key role in identifying employers' needs, job opportunities, and educational requirements for the future.

Supportive services and needs-related payments

The Employment and Training Division has established written policies and procedures to ensure coordination with other entities, and to ensure the highest quality, most comprehensive service possible. At the same time, the Division seeks to prevent duplication of resources and services, and has established limits on the amount and duration of services. These policies and procedures ensure that supportive services are WIOA-funded only when they are not available through other avenues, and the services are necessary for the individual to participate in Title I career or training services.

Supportive services may include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation
- Child Care
- Dependent Care
- Housing
- Needs-related payments which are only available to unemployed individuals enrolled in training services

The following is a description of primary cross-program strategies for targeted populations in Wyoming's workforce development system. In addition to these, many other strategies occur locally.

Targeted customer groups are served through standard delivery of services, using Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, other program funding, with emphasis on special needs. The following explanations illustrate how this is done in Wyoming.

Low-income participants

Low-income clients are served directly through WIOA and other cooperative efforts. Among other areas of cooperation, and together with the Wyoming Children and Families Initiative, Workforce Services strives to serve low-income clients by partnering with the Wyoming Department of Family Services through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Employment and Training Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance (POWER) programs. TANF customers are served by Workforce Services through the Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities program, which has as its mission:

- Provide assistance to needy families so children may be cared for in their homes or in the homes of relatives.
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The State's mission for the TANF-POWER program is:

- Promote and support individual and family responsibility through the belief that families, not government, should be responsible for themselves and their children;
- Provide information and services within program limits and restrictions that allow the parent(s) or caretaker(s) to make informed and responsible decisions concerning the family's progress toward self-sufficiency.

The POWER plan is created and implemented at the State level. The program manager creates the plan every two years in coordination with the Department of Family Services leadership. Workforce Services works to help individuals in this program have the same focus and service as other workers that are served by its programs.

POWER case managers coordinate services at the local level with the Department of Family Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Salvation Army Hope Center, sheltered-family facilities, homeless shelters, Interfaith, food banks, self-help centers, Community Action Partnership, child-care organizations, clothing providers, and WIOA. WIOA referrals are made when there is a need for training and POWER clients demonstrate a desire and commitment to enter a career field. Workforce Services is continuing to build and enhance these partnerships.

In Natrona and Laramie counties, Workforce Services partners with the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP) to serve low-income clients through WIOA and other programs. The program's purpose is to alleviate hunger and malnutrition. It helps low-income households adopt more nutritious diets through normal channels of trade and increase food purchasing power. Individuals who receive SNAP benefits are automatically eligible for WIOA. Yearly, the Workforce Services program manager coordinates with Family Services to prepare the plan and carry out the program.

Dads Making a Difference

Through a memorandum of understanding, Family Services and Workforce Services operate the Dads Making a Difference program by co-enrolling participants in both the TANF and WIOA programs to serve low-income custodial and noncustodial fathers with multiple barriers to employment, including a large percentage of ex-offenders. The program serves about 30 fathers a year and focuses on job training, job placement assistance, and life skills for success at work and in relationships, parenting training, counseling services, and community engagement. Dads participate in weekly life skills sessions and full-time vocational training in an in-demand career field. They also perform volunteer community service to develop leadership skills and civic pride. At the end of the 16-week program, a job placement is supported by a minimum of one-year follow-up services and alumni support.

Ex-offenders

Workforce Services will continue partnering with the Department of Corrections to prepare ex-offenders for work and to place them in employment. The program will provide testing, job application and resume assistance, and help with interview skills. In addition, Workforce Services is represented on the State Reentry Task Force and intercedes with employers to help them accept ex-offender workers.

American Job Centers regularly provide presentations at Corrections Department facilities and have a presence at their quarterly resource fairs. Workforce Services supports the transition-from-prison-to-community program and partners with the Wyoming Department of Homeland Security, business representatives, community representatives like faith-based groups, and the Department of Family Services in this effort. The Department of Corrections has updated the workbook, "Starting Point, A Guide to Preparing the Job-Seeking Ex-Offender," which is distributed by American Job Centers to ex-offenders seeking assistance when re-entering the workforce.

Older workers

Older workers face significant employment barriers in Wyoming. The Senior Community Service Employment Program provides services to people age 55 years or older whose income level is 125 percent below Federal poverty guidelines, are unemployed, and have limited employment prospects. Services include comprehensive case management, employment training, and up to 20 hours per week of part-time, subsidized community service assignments or on-the-job training. The goal is to transition participants from subsidized employment and training into full or part-time unsubsidized employment earning a self-sufficient wage. Older workers will also be served through Wagner-Peyser and WIOA.

Veterans

Staff in the American Job Centers are trained on the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program requirements with emphasis on priority of service in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor requirements for eligible Veterans and spouses. Upon client identification as a veteran, American Job Center staff work with each individual to determine significant barriers to employment and provide career services to eligible veterans. Eligible veterans and related eligible persons faced with significant barriers to employment, to include education, are eligible for assistance by a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist. The specialist assesses the client's needs and determines eligibility for appropriate occupational skills or educational program and determines an appropriate funding source.

The Veterans Program supports state strategies using Federal guidance for Veterans Employment and Training Services and integration into the state workforce agency, the Department of Workforce Services. The Veterans Employment and Training Program managers receive applicable training through seminars, phone conferences, and other means by U.S. Department of Labor personnel and other workforce experts. The program managers, in turn, advise American Job Center staff and others regarding the program, to ensure continuity of operations and service. Furthermore, regular phone conferences occur for veterans' representatives. When available, American Job Center staff attend training at the National Veterans Training Institute to supplement in-house training

American Job Centers also use creative approaches to serve veterans and other target populations, such as the Tri-State Veteran Job Fair, involving Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado. The WY-CO Workforce Partnership, which spans Weld, Boulder, and Larimer counties in Colorado, and Laramie (Cheyenne) County in Wyoming, meets regularly. This partnership sponsors regional veteran and non-veteran job fairs.

Adult and youth basic academic skills attainment

The Department of Workforce Services coordinates the fulfillment of basic academic skills goals for its adult and out-of-school youth clients with the Community College Commission's Adult Education program. The Department or the Adult Education program assesses client needs using approved standardized assessments, such as GAIN and TABE testing. Such testing determines the client's capability and readiness for success in training and coursework, as well as the client's potential for long-term success. When an unemployed person comes into an Adult Education Center, he or she must register with the Wyoming at Work system.

Educational and career plans are developed in the Adult Education Program. The plans will be integrated with Workforce Services to better coordinate services needed by the student to achieve their goals.

An operational obstacle exists between the Adult Education Program and the Department of Workforce Services. The Department considers an adult as functional if he or she tests at the 9th-grade level. However, Adult Education requires testing out with skills appropriate for entry into postsecondary education and vocational training. This discrepancy is overcome through communication and consideration of individual workers' needs. Both organizations will continue working to improve coordination at all locations.

Adults and youth with disabilities

Services for individuals with disabilities are provided primarily through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation within the Department of Workforce Services. Division personnel serve workers within the One-Stop system and also travel to satellite offices. Services are provided based on coordinated plans and needs.

The Employment and Training Division coordinates with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on a regular basis to maximize client services. Training expenses are one example of how the divisions may work together to capitalize on each program's strengths and ultimately benefit the client. Each may pay for a portion of an individual's training program. Or one may cover the cost of tuition while the other covers supportive services such as tools, rent, or transportation expenses.

These divisions recognize each other's program strengths and often refer clients to each other for appropriate assessments and services. This can occur by physically taking a client to a Vocational Rehabilitation office located within One-Stop office, or by phone if necessary. Locally, the divisions also hold regular meetings, either in person or by phone, to review the progress and needs of mutual clients.

The two will work together to assist secondary school-aged students on individual education plans to achieve their high school diploma. If students have already dropped out of school, the Divisions will combine efforts to help individuals achieve a high school equivalency diploma. In addition, the Employment and Training Division may provide work experience opportunities, followed by assistance in entering post-secondary education, training, or employment.

Adult and youth ex-offenders

For several years, Workforce Services has partnered with the Department of Corrections to help ex-offenders. Coordination occurs at the State and local levels. The overall purpose is to help individuals ages 15 and older who have criminal backgrounds, as well as those who are incarcerated and are preparing to transition back into their communities. Both the younger and older ex-offender populations are projected to increase, and so are the needs for services.

Workforce Services and Corrections are coordinating to provide special education services like those in the public school system, including individual education plans. One goal is to help people who did not graduate from high school to earn a high school equivalency diploma and thus prepare for employment. Participants might have a job while they are incarcerated, providing skills that could help them transition out of prison. Other services include interest and aptitude testing, job applications, resume assistance, interview techniques,

and computer classes through Eastern Wyoming College and Central Wyoming College. Computer classes are taught by Corrections staff members who are adjunct instructors, for which participants can obtain college transcripts and credit. Participants also can study college welding coursework, which enables them to receive a college certificate and American Welding Society recognition.

Dislocated workers

Dislocated workers will be served at all Wyoming One-Stop and through Rapid Response where applicable. The American Job Centers are required to offer basic and individualized career services, as well as training services for this and other targeted populations when appropriate. Also, training services will be provided, as needed, in coordination with Trade Adjustment Assistance and other partner programs.

Unemployment insurance (UI) claimants

By merging the former Department of Employment with the Department of Workforce Services, Wyoming took steps to strengthen and improve the quality of services to UI claimants. Through the One-Stop centers, claimants will continue to have access to the UI system for claims, adjudication, and related programs. Workforce Services also can more easily align changes in the UI system with other programs and activities in the Department.

Homeless workers

To serve homeless individuals, Workforce Services partners with homeless shelters and other organizations. The Department answers workforce-related questions and assists with job preparedness and work searches. Workforce readiness workshops cover such topics as resume writing, interview skills, computer basics, and job application preparation.

The definition of homeless used by Department programs is: “Homeless – As defined in 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, is an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence and:

- “Includes any adult or youth who is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or other reason.
- “Is living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- “Is living in an emergency or transitional shelter.
- “Is abandoned in a hospital.
- “Is awaiting foster care placement.
- “Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

- “Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- “Migratory children.”

Workforce Services will continue working with local clothiers and other organizations with secondhand clothing and other necessities, to provide professional attire for prospective employees in target groups.

Some of these efforts have been very successful. Beyond the Rack is one such example. Beyond the Rack is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Cheyenne, Wyoming. It was founded in 2012 by the Wyoming Discovery 9 (D9) Team. Discovery 9 members -- a group put together by the Department of Workforce Services -- determined that many men in Cheyenne do not have access to quality workplace attire and that proper apparel can make the difference in securing a job. Beyond the Rack is a creative solution that addresses fundamental needs of job seekers with barriers to employment.

Workforce Services has increased efforts to partner with businesses, especially companies that are on the rise. The Department will encourage such businesses to use its services and will engage them through employer forums and seminars.

The Department will continue to engage many other local partners, including local economic development groups, child care providers, community colleges, chambers of commerce, the Board of Cooperative Education Services, community halfway houses, Wyoming Contractors Association, faith-based organizations, and other state agencies. The Department will strengthen working relationships through MOUs and partnership agreements that facilitate information sharing and funding coordination.

The Department also will continue to work closely with the Wind River Indian Reservation. In Lander and Riverton, about 30 percent of the clients who use the One-Stop services are American Indians. The new Wind River Job Corps Center in Riverton will be a major partner.

The Department will continue to seek out eligible training providers to increase opportunities for participants and will expand opportunities for online and distance learning. The latter enables program participants to obtain training that may not be available otherwise in Wyoming, or to the degree that is needed. The Department will widely disseminate the Wyoming at Work training provider module that allows providers to add and amend curriculum as needed. It also identifies and makes available to the public a list of eligible training providers, including the cost and performance measures for each eligible program.

The agency will encourage greater use of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Federal bonding by employers to open job placement opportunities for harder to serve customers. Through this tax credit and Federal bonding, the Department encourages employers to hire individuals with barriers to employment, including veterans, public assistance recipients, ex-offenders, individuals with disabilities, and high-risk youth. The main objective of these programs is to enable targeted employees to move gradually from economic dependency to self-sufficiency.

Individuals with disabilities

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs. The Division also helps business recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. Through this "dual client" approach, we assist individuals with injuries, illness, or impairments achieve competitive employment and increased independence. The Division also assists business owners and employers through full-service business consultation on a variety of business and disability-related areas.

D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

Registered Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship must be a widely known option and thus needs constant media coverage and advertising to become part of the workforce and education culture of Wyoming.

Registered Apprenticeship has five required components:

1. The apprentice must be employed by the sponsor or participating employer.
2. The apprenticeship must include structured on-the-job training.
3. The apprenticeship must include formalized theoretical instruction.
4. The employer must provide a progressive wage schedule.
5. A national occupational credential must be issued upon completion of Registered Apprenticeship. The Wyoming Office of Apprenticeship provides Wyoming businesses the technical assistance to meet national standards for registration with the U.S. Department of Labor in order to access the benefits of a registered apprenticeship for both the companies and apprentices. Businesses with Registered Apprenticeship programs have access to a free nationwide network of expertise and support, and other resources from Federal programs.

Currently, Wyoming has 78 active sponsors with 363 active apprentices. These numbers are dynamic; they change with the needs of businesses to train workers.

Adult Education

Workforce basic literacy training is offered that meets the needs of specific businesses. This training is created through discussions with a business to determine its specific needs, such as contextualized math, writing, and reading. A program of study then is developed.

Business networking offers businesses subject matter experts who can help address work skills deficiencies. These experts would help improve worker efficiency and effectiveness. Employers often report a shortage of quality employees with the skills they need.

Coordination through the Workforce Advisory Groups with community partners to develop the training that is required as part of an integrated education and training service. Adult Education can partner to provide the education component.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is committed to helping our employer partners find candidates who are skilled, loyal, and committed to company success. Even after placement, employers and employees receive ongoing support from the Division's professional staff. Such assistance includes job training, guidance on ADA regulations, and information on disability and employment guidelines. We can also help with financial incentives and facilitation of tax credits.

Across Wyoming, too many workers with proven skills are currently left out of the workplace. As Wyoming's leading placement organization for people with disabilities, the Division is working to change this by bridging talent and ability, so companies and employees succeed.

E. Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv).

The six core WIOA programs in Wyoming continue to engage the state's education and training providers by using various methods throughout the workforce system life cycle.

Workforce Services, Research & Planning section, will continue pursuit of the goals in the Workforce Data Quality Initiative with the community colleges by:

1. Using longitudinal data to evaluate the performance of Federal and State-supported education and job training programs.
2. Providing user-friendly information to consumers to help them select the education and training programs that best suit their needs.
3. Enhancing knowledge about the workforce system and the impact of State workforce development programs.

Workforce Services will continue and expand upon the analysis of student outcomes in the labor market, using wage records and occupational licensing information as described in the MOU with the Community College Commission and the community colleges. Research and Planning's working relationship with the community colleges will be carried out in conjunction with Workforce Services' Office of Workforce Programs. Research and Planning's working relationship with education is documented in its MOUs at http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/education_we_connect.htm.

A job-driven education and training system is supported by a Workforce Information Grant, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and State-funded industry and occupational projections, direct compensation occupational estimates (Occupational Employment Statistics), indirect compensation (employer provided benefits) estimates, New Hires Skills occupational survey results, and turnover analysis.

For some training and educational programs and occupations that require longer-term, post-secondary education, one option has been to enroll participants concurrently for associate's degrees and bachelor's degrees, and provide assistance toward obtaining both degrees, by helping the clients budget resources and utilize available funding sources, within prescribed limits.

For example, workforce specialists used Workforce Investment Act funding to help individuals obtain nursing associate's degrees, which enabled them to become immediately employable. The workforce specialists then made appropriate community referrals to assist them with financial wrap-around services and with additional resources to achieve their goal employment.

The Employment and Training Division helps its out-of-school clients obtain basic skills through cooperative relationships with the community colleges and other service providers. Basic skill testing is done at the colleges and also at many One-Stop centers. Workforce Services or the Adult Education program assess client needs through TABE testing. This testing is one method in determining the client's capability and readiness for success in training and coursework.

The Division will facilitate training opportunities through WIOA and other programs for such positions as certified welders, diesel mechanics, commercially-licensed drivers, and electricians. Such workers will be needed in the mining and construction industries, for job openings that occur as a result of replacement needs and industry growth. Also, there continues to be a need for local and long-haul truck drivers. Commercial driver licenses can be obtained within a few weeks and at a relatively low cost. The Division helps Wyoming workers overcome basic skills deficiencies, so they are ready for these and other positions, and for advancement in the chosen industries.

A planned strategy is to help young people stay in school. Workforce Services strives to meet this challenge through its cooperative partnership with the Wyoming Department of Education, school districts, local schools (including alternative schools), and the higher education system. This effort includes coordinated efforts to help students understand career alternatives, to offer pathways for acquiring skills, and to help clients pursue opportunities through post-secondary school options.

Policymakers across the U.S. and in Wyoming have increasingly looked for ways to raise student achievement from kindergarten through high school, and to improve college access and success. As a result, states are creating integrated systems in which all levels of education – pre-kindergarten through college – coordinate, communicate, and educate as one system.

A major initiative undertaken by K-12, The University of Wyoming and Community Colleges has been in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education. The future economic drivers of the state demand workers acquire knowledge and skills in these four important fields.

Many Wyoming colleges have stepped up to provide theoretical learning, either by offering classes in the evenings or weekends, or on-line. Community colleges are working to meet the local business needs by offering many up-front classes that open the door to employment in conjunction with classes as an apprentice. With the flexibility of Registered Apprenticeship, the plan is to grow Registered Apprenticeship programs in Wyoming to better provide skill sets needed by Wyoming employers.

Adult Education now offers "integrated education and training" programs, which are developed around high-demand jobs in a community. This program includes concurrent academic classes contextualized with the job-training component. Workforce Advisory Groups will

help to determine the top needs for their service areas, and a program of study will be developed. Community colleges and their Career and Technical Education programs, training schools, and WIOA partners will contribute by engaging relevant subject matter experts in the development of job-driven education and training systems.

Career Pathways plans will be developed as a collaborative effort. Workforce Advisory Group partners help determine needs, resources, non-duplicated services, and support services that will support strong workforce systems. Workforce Advisory Groups include members from business and industry, secondary and postsecondary education, the public sector, and economic development entities where possible. Career Pathways will include planned services from contributions from K-12 Career and Technical Education, community college Career and Technical Education, community college workforce development programs, businesses, and other core partners.

F. Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers.

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

The six core WIOA programs in Wyoming continue to engage the state's education and training providers by using various methods throughout the workforce system life cycle.

Workforce Services, Research & Planning section, will continue pursuit of the goals in the Workforce Data Quality Initiative with the community colleges by:

1. Using longitudinal data to evaluate the performance of Federal and State-supported education and job training programs.
2. Providing user-friendly information to consumers to help them select the education and training programs that best suit their needs.
3. Enhancing knowledge about the workforce system and the impact of State workforce development programs.

Workforce Services will continue and expand upon the analysis of student outcomes in the labor market, using wage records and occupational licensing information. Research and Planning's working relationship with other providers will be carried out in conjunction with Workforce Services' Office of Workforce Programs.

G. Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

The six core WIOA programs in Wyoming continue to engage the state's education and training providers by using various methods throughout the workforce system life cycle.

Workforce Services, Research & Planning section, will continue pursuit of the goals in the Workforce Data Quality Initiative with the community colleges by:

1. Using longitudinal data to evaluate the performance of Federal and State-supported education and job training programs.
2. Providing user-friendly information to consumers to help them select the education and training programs that best suit their needs.
3. Enhancing knowledge about the workforce system and the impact of State workforce development programs.

Workforce Services will continue and expand upon the analysis of student outcomes in the labor market, using wage records and occupational licensing information as described in the MOU with the Community College Commission and the community colleges. Research and Planning's working relationship with the community colleges will be carried out in conjunction with Workforce Services' Office of Workforce Programs. Research and Planning's working relationship with education is documented in its MOUs at http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/education_we_connect.htm.

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For some training and educational programs and occupations that require longer-term, post-secondary education, one option has been to enroll participants concurrently for associate's degrees and bachelor's degrees, and provide assistance toward obtaining both degrees, by helping the clients budget resources and utilize available funding sources, within prescribed limits.

For example, workforce specialists used Workforce Investment Act funding to help individuals obtain nursing associate's degrees, which enabled them to become immediately employable. The workforce specialists then made appropriate community referrals to assist them with financial wrap-around services and with additional resources to achieve their goal employment.

The Employment and Training Division helps its out-of-school clients obtain basic skills through cooperative relationships with the community colleges and other service providers. Basic skill testing is done at the colleges and also at many One-Stop centers. Workforce Services or the Adult Education program assess client needs through TABE testing. This testing is one method in determining the client's capability and readiness for success in training and coursework.

The Division will facilitate training opportunities through WIOA and other programs for such positions as certified welders, diesel mechanics, commercially-licensed drivers, and electricians. Such workers will be needed in the mining and construction industries, for job openings that occur as a result of replacement needs and industry growth. Also, there continues to be a need for local and long-haul truck drivers. Commercial driver licenses can be obtained within a few weeks and at a relatively low cost. The Division helps Wyoming workers overcome basic skills deficiencies, so they are ready for these and other positions, and for advancement in the chosen industries.

A planned strategy is to help young people stay in school. Workforce Services strives to meet this challenge through its cooperative partnership with the Wyoming Department of Education, school districts, local schools (including alternative schools), and the higher education system. This effort includes coordinated efforts to help students understand career alternatives, to offer pathways for acquiring skills, and to help clients pursue opportunities through post-secondary school options.

Policymakers across the U.S. and in Wyoming have increasingly looked for ways to raise student achievement from kindergarten through high school, and to improve college access and success. As a result, states are creating integrated systems in which all levels of education – pre-kindergarten through college – coordinate, communicate, and educate as one system. These efforts have been clustered into councils: K-16, P-16 and P-20.

Wyoming operates a P-16 Education Council, which is a non-partisan, non-governmental, 501(c)(3) organization made up of a partnership of state business, education, and government leaders. One of the Council's goals is to increase student success, and as they transition from each level of education to the next, it has nurtured continuous improvement in five related P-16 system components: academic standards, curricula, assessments, instructional quality, and system accountability.

One of the P-16 Education Council's major initiatives has been in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education. The future economic drivers of the state demand workers acquire knowledge and skills in these four important fields.

Many Wyoming colleges have stepped up to provide theoretical learning, either by offering classes in the evenings or weekends, or on-line. Community colleges are working to meet the local business needs by offering many up-front classes that open the door to employment in conjunction with classes as an apprentice. With the flexibility of Registered Apprenticeship, the plan is to grow Registered Apprenticeship programs in Wyoming to better provide skill sets needed by Wyoming employers.

Adult Education now offers "integrated education and training" programs, which are developed around high-demand jobs in a community. This program includes concurrent academic classes contextualized with the job-training component. Workforce Advisory Groups will help to determine the top needs for their service areas, and a program of study will be developed. Community colleges and their Career and Technical Education programs, training schools, and WIOA partners will contribute by engaging relevant subject matter experts in the development of job-driven education and training systems.

Career Pathways plans will be developed as a collaborative effort. Workforce Advisory Group partners help determine needs, resources, non-duplicated services, and support services that will support strong workforce systems. Workforce Advisory Groups include members from business and industry, secondary and postsecondary education, the public sector, and economic development entities where possible. Career Pathways will include planned services from contributions from K-12 Career and Technical Education, community college Career and Technical Education, community college workforce development programs, businesses, and other core partners.

H. Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

To overcome challenges related to longer-term, post-secondary education needs, workforce specialists will continue to use WIOA resources to pay for tuition, books, and fees for clients. Also, they will continue to refer clients to other agencies or programs, such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, for partnering assistance. Individuals will be encouraged to apply for Free Application for Federal

Student Aid and Pell grant funds that will work cooperatively or in place of Workforce Services funding. Frequently, clients use their Pell grant and Free Application for Federal Student Aid awards up front when a four-year degree is being pursued, and then come back to the American Job Center during the last two years of their degree to seek assistance. Pell grants are now available to Adult Education students as they start a career pathway and work towards completing their High School Equivalency Certificate. This is particularly true for adult clients, whereas youth participants are usually assisted monetarily by Workforce Services during the first two years of their post-secondary education, depending on the length of the program. Clients are typically required to report monthly to a workforce specialist regarding their educational experience and needs. Grades also are monitored.

Wyoming will also improve access to postsecondary credentials by increasing coordination with the community colleges, Registered Apprenticeships and other training providers. Streamlined services will be provided by giving business and education leaders a leading voice in the identification of training needs and the development of sector strategies. The State will expand their focus on local business and economic development needs through the work of the Wyoming Workforce Development Council's focus on sector strategies. This will be accomplished through the use of labor market information, coordinating employer relationships, and measuring the usefulness and impact of training, with businesses and employers. Sector partnerships will be expanded to involve institutions of higher education and other training providers in addressing employers' hiring and training needs. Wyoming will continue to support the diversification of training for new and growing businesses as particular training needs are identified. Registered Apprenticeships will be a key partner in this process through their immediate job placement and on-going, industry focused training curriculum. The use of Registered Apprenticeships will be streamlined, and made available to the public through their automatic inclusion on Wyoming's Eligible Training Provider list.

The Wyoming state strategies identified in the Governor's Goals, Objectives and Strategies will improve access to the activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC) will be utilizing Career Pathways as a model to address employers' needs, community needs, and the availability of postsecondary training partners, including community colleges and Registered Apprenticeship providers.

Workforce Advisory Groups (WAGs) are being formed across the state in order to create communication links between the WWDC and the diverse populations in our communities. Wyoming is a single service area state with no local workforce investment boards. WAGs will serve as the primary information funnel for communities across the state.

The goals, objectives, and strategies as they apply to "improving access to postsecondary credentials" are as follows:

Goal 1: Ensure Wyoming Employers have access to a skilled, high-quality workforce in today's changing economy

Obj. 1.1 Engage the business community and align education and workforce training opportunities with the needs of employers.

Obj. 1.2 Ensure training is predicated upon a labor market need by using employer feedback, labor market information and sector strategy input.

Strategies:

- The Wyoming Workforce Development Council Executive Committee shall focus on the state's most significant short and long-term workforce development priorities that should inform the full Board's priorities
- A sector strategy subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall oversee sector strategy activities and identify new industries that need sector strategies.
- Quarterly supply and demand labor market information reports shall be provided to the Workforce Development Council.

Goal 2: Ensure all Wyoming people who want to work have access to an open, streamlined and effective workforce development system.

Obj. 2.2 Utilize Career Pathways as an umbrella model in One-Stop centers.

Obj. 2.3 Evaluate efforts to ensure that training and education requirements match the state's labor market needs.

Strategies:

- A Career Pathways subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall be formed to oversee the development of Career Pathways activities
- Utilize integrated training and education programs as a way to more efficiently move adults in need of literacy skills or high school equivalency certificates into the workplace

Goal 3: Prepare all Wyoming youth to be both career and college ready. (Youth are 16-21 or 24 depending on the program)

Obj. 3.2 Incorporate a Career Pathways system as a model to better guide young people.

Obj. 3.3 Incorporate pre-apprenticeship programs to offer young people opportunities to gain technical skills that are best learned on the job.

Obj. 3.4 Disseminate information regarding future in-demand labor market needs.

Strategies:

- Promote career exploration through Career Pathways so young people can acquire educational, technical, and social skills that enhance career development
- Develop pre-apprenticeship strategies with the Wyoming Office of Registered Apprenticeship to foster a future pipeline of skilled workers

- Using labor market information and input from the business community, communicate future labor market needs to community colleges, apprenticeship programs and other training entities and stakeholders

Considering these goals, objectives and strategies there are various approaches being explored to inform the multiple partners (One-Stops, Adult Education, community colleges, Workforce Advisory Groups (WAGS), and the Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC)) involved in addressing access to these credentials including industry-recognized certificates and licenses.

1. The WWDC priorities shall inform community colleges apprenticeship programs, and other postsecondary providers with a description of skill sets needed and magnitude of need by WAG service regions.
2. Each WAG's input to the WWDC shall take into account the need for certificate and AAS degrees, provide insight into new and emerging industries, economic trends, predicted new and replacement positions in the regional labor market.
3. These shall inform the Adult Education segment of a specific Career Pathway regarding need for integrated education and training (IET) programs which concurrently offer contextualized basic skills instruction and training from apprenticeships, postsecondary education programs, and skills training.
4. Local WAGs will be able to inform local planning regarding education and training needs in region.
5. A periodic survey of certificates, training, and apprenticeship availability as well as participation and placement rates will inform which licenses, certificates, industry recognized credentials, and apprenticeships are available in each WAG region, and will inform pathway formation, maintenance and discontinuance recommendations to the WWDC.
6. The creation of career ladders which include stackable and portable credentials can be used by all partners to help align services along with Labor Market Information reports.
7. There may be a need to utilize mapping to postsecondary credentials in the design/development of Career Pathways. Integration of k-12, Adult Education, apprenticeship programs and community college into Career Pathways will result in a seamless system.
8. Work with community colleges to build dual enrollment opportunities for the integrated education and training programs for adult education clients prior to High School Equivalency Certificate completion is a high priority.
9. Assessment of funding streams from federal and state agencies and community resources to build support in accessing credentials and to develop priorities.
10. Funding will be assessed in two ways:
 - a. To support program offerings
 - b. To support direct cost to clients

To overcome challenges related to longer-term, post-secondary education needs, workforce specialists will continue to use WIOA resources to pay for tuition, books, and fees for clients. Also, they will continue to refer clients to other agencies or programs, such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, for partnering assistance. Individuals will be encouraged to apply for Free Application for Federal Student Aid and Pell grant funds that will work cooperatively or in place of Workforce Services funding. Frequently, clients use their Pell grant and Free Application for Federal Student Aid awards up front when a four-year degree is being pursued, and then come back to the American Job Center during the last two years of their degree to seek assistance. Pell grants are now available to Adult Education students as they start a career pathway and work toward completing their High School Equivalency Certificate. This is particularly true for adult clients, whereas youth participants are usually assisted monetarily by the Department of Workforce Services during the first two years of their post-secondary education, depending on the length of the program. Clients are typically required to report monthly to a workforce specialist regarding their educational experience and needs. Grades also are monitored.

I. Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies.

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies and activities in the State.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council and Department of Workforce Services have established relationships with economic development entities across Wyoming which have been fostered for many years. In many cases economic development entities are required partners as a result of state-run, sector strategy initiatives funded by the Wyoming Workforce Development Fund. The Workforce Development Training Fund is a state-funded economic development tool that provides funding for training over which the Council has oversight. Further, the Council maintains the Wyoming Business Council's CEO as one of its members. The Wyoming Business Council is an economic development entity that boasts seven (7) regional offices covering all of Wyoming. Further, the Wyoming Business Council employs individuals who promote economic development in industries important to Wyoming.

b. State Operating Systems and Policies

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in Section II Strategic Elements . This includes—

1. the State Operating Systems That Will Support the Implementation of the State's Strategies. This Must Include a Description Of—

A. State Operating Systems That Support Coordinated Implementation of State Strategies (e.g., Labor Market Information Systems, Data Systems, Communication Systems, Case-management Systems, Job Banks, Etc.).

The Research and Planning section will continue to development and dissemination of information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, workforce investment grants, state funded labor market information and where possible National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health supported workplace safety research, evaluation, and surveillance. Workforce Services will establish a training policy for employees, workforce investment board staff and members, and other customers in the sources and uses of labor, market information including education in the principles of process and impact evaluation. Training facilitates enhanced customer feedback to improve the labor market information system.

Across the WIOA core programs and the Labor Market Information Division within the Wyoming Department of Workforce services, there are several disparate case management and data systems. The State of Wyoming uses Google Apps for email, calendar, and collaborative communications. Google Apps is available to all State of Wyoming employees. The Labor Market Information Division has multiple MOUs that allow for data sharing between core programs, partner programs, surrounding states' programs, and the LMI Division.

Following is a description of each case management systems used by the core programs.

Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Workers & Youth -- Wyoming at Work

The Department of Workforce Services currently uses Geographic Solutions' Virtual Operating System for labor exchange services and case management. The state's electronic labor management system, Wyoming at Work, is part of the Virtual One-Stop System designed and operated by Geographic Solutions, Inc. of Palm Harbor, Florida. The Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and Trade Adjustment Assistance system applications have been in place in Wyoming at Work for years, with regular updates. Wyoming at Work also includes detailed labor market information and Wyoming's list of eligible training providers. Newer modules and system upgrades are continually added to improve and streamline the services available to Wyoming's job seekers, employers, and Department staff.

Workforce Services uses multiple layers of security to meet State and Federal data compliance measures and policies, and to protect client information from unauthorized access or disclosure, and possible misuse or abuse. The Department uses the latest Internet technology standards to encrypt and secure all Web application traffic. Client Social Security numbers (SSNs) submitted through Web applications are obfuscated during receipt in the database. Servers housing the databases containing SSNs are "single-purpose restricted" to cleared system administrators. All database backups are encrypted using the most current standards. Only authorized Department program staff can view applicant/trainee information through a highly secure software interface. Authorized staff members are instructed on the appropriate handling and protection of this data by their management or designated representative.

Vocational Rehabilitation – WINRS

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation currently utilizes Libera, Inc. System 7 product for case management. The system is designed and operated by Libera, Inc. of Jamestown, New York. The General Rehabilitation Program, Supported Employment, Small Business Program, and Youth Transition Program are managed with this system. Regular updates will occur to the system to maintain compliance with State and Federal requirements. The Division installed this system on August 31, 2015. Newer modules and system upgrades will be continually added to improve and streamline the services available to the Division staff as they work to assist the eligible disabled population in Wyoming.

The Division uses multiple layers of security to meet State and Federal data compliance measures and policies, and to protect client information from unauthorized access or disclosure and possible misuse or abuse. The Division uses the latest Internet technology standards to encrypt and secure all Web application traffic. Client SSNs are hidden after Workforce Services staff members enter the SSNs into the system. Servers housing the databases containing SSNs are "single-purpose restricted" to cleared system administrators. All database backups are encrypted using the most current standards. Only authorized Department of Workforce Services' staff can view all

client information through a highly secure software interface. Authorized Department staff members are instructed on the appropriate handling and protection of this data by the Vocational Rehabilitation management team.

Adult Education and Family Literacy – Literacy Pro

Adult Education and Family Literacy use the National Reporting System student information management system LACES by LiteracyPro. LACES collects demographic, assessment, instructional contact hours, and programmatic assignment information. It is able to disaggregate data as needed. Performance measures for postsecondary entry and completion of high school equivalency are also collected. Employment status is collected upon entry and data matching of employment to Adult Education clients is completed with the Research and Planning section at this time. Only aggregated data is reported into the National Reporting System portal for Federal reporting.

Security levels are assigned based on the employee's staffing position, with all access being established by administrative personnel at the state level. The State Adult Education Office may access all student information databases (LACES) at the provider level. Local providers only see their own data. Unique client identification numbers are assigned within the system. Student SSN information is used only in the data match process for employment and by the National Student Clearinghouse for students entering college or postsecondary skills training.

B. Data-collection and Reporting Processes Used for All Programs and Activities, Including Those Present in One-stop Centers*.

Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Workers & Youth -- Wyoming at Work

Wyoming currently uses and intends to continue using an information management system called Wyoming at Work. It is operated by a third party vendor, Geographic Solutions.

The Wyoming at Work system facilitates common data collection for Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, Veterans Employment and Training Services and Trade Adjustment Assistance. Reporting of WIOA and Wagner-Peyser data and performance outcomes, including Veterans Program data and outcomes, is accomplished through the Federal Data Reporting and Validation System (eDRVS).

The management information system collects and stores the data for required Federal reports including:

- ETA 9002 Series Reports
- VETS 200 Series Reports
- ETA 9090 Quarterly Reports
- Wagner Peyser Act 7B Reports for the Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program (MIC)
- 9048 Profiling Report

Wyoming at Work contains a component library system that collects and stores elements required for Federal reports. The component library solution captures the appropriate elements from data forms and then generates the Federal and State mandated Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Employment and Training Services and Trade Adjustment Act reports. Reports include both the quarterly and annual reports required under these acts.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – case management system

The Division installed a new case management system August 2015. It is hosted by a third party vendor, Libera, Inc. The system is designed to keep the Division in compliance with data collecting and reporting requirements of the Rehabilitation Services Administration and WIOA.

The system collects, stores, and processes information into formats necessary to meet the needs of the following reports:

- RSA 113 Quarterly Reports
- RSA 911 Annual Report
- RSA 2 Annual Report

Furthermore, Vocational Rehabilitation will work closely with other Workforce Services divisions to ensure that appropriate system integration and data-sharing occurs to align resources, improve reporting processes and outcomes, and enhance the consumer's experience. The ultimate goal is to have the WIOA core programs working seamlessly together.

Adult Education and Family Literacy

LACES by LiteracyPro is used by all local Adult Education programs across the state. Vendor trainers train staff in software, including diagnosis, analysis of data, report production, and online technical assistance. Many features are built into the NexGen version of the software. Three trainings are held per year, with one offering specific assistance to individual programs with a strong emphasis on data quality.

The National Reporting System Guidelines are part of the training all local directors receive. Definitions, charts of educational functioning levels, assessments, and recommended procedures needed in data recording and reporting are included in this guidance.

Aggregated data is reported through the National Reporting System portal to the U.S. Department of Education –Office of Career Technical and Adult Education.

Adult Education includes students registered with Wyoming at Work as part of the induction/intake process for unemployed persons.

Labor market information

Extend, continue, and where relevant revise the historical and current provision of Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Wagner–Peyser, and WIOA program participation data provided to Research and Planning for longitudinal and descriptive analysis in support of planning and evaluation using UI administrative records, occupational licensing, and educational outcomes.

2. the State Policies That Will Support the Implementation of the State’s Strategies (e.g., Co-enrollment Policies and Universal Intake Processes Where Appropriate). in Addition, Describe the State’s Process for Developing Guidelines for State-administered One-stop Partner Programs’ Contributions to a One-stop Delivery System, Including Benchmarks, and Its Guidance to Assist Local Boards, Chief Elected Officials, and Local One-stop Partners in Determining Equitable and Stable Methods of Funding Infrastructure in Accordance with Sec. 121(h)(1)(b). Beginning with the State Plan Modification in 2018 and for Subsequent State Plans and State Plan Modifications, the State Must Also Include Such Guidelines.

Wyoming recognizes the value of co-enrollment among core partner programs, as well as other Federal and State programs, and currently operates within policy under this practice.

To streamline the delivery of career services to all One-Stop customers, Wyoming provides WIOA Basic Career Services through the Wagner–Peyser Program. This process allows for a seamless transition into WIOA Individualized Career Services and Training opportunities for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants with additional barriers to employment. Wyoming also encourages co-enrollment of youth participants in Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, when applicable, to capitalize on each program’s services and funding.

To maximize services to Wyoming job seekers, co-enrollment of WIOA participants with Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education programs takes place when determined appropriate.

Co-enrollment is also mandated for some programs not included in the list of core programs. This includes Trade Adjustment Assistance participants, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) participants, and unemployment insurance (UI) recipients. Wyoming considers career services to such customers an important step toward improving both the efficiency and effectiveness of all programs. Since most trade-impacted workers meet WIOA Dislocated Worker eligibility criteria, these individuals are enrolled in the WIOA program as soon as possible following a layoff notice.

Enrollment in the Wagner–Peyser Program is required for all participants of the TANF work program and recipients of unemployment insurance payments. As with other co-enrollment requirements, this policy is enforced as a means of providing participants with all of the services available to facilitate their return to self-sufficient employment as soon as possible.

Currently, a universal intake process for Wyoming’s core programs is not available. However, this process will be considered as resources become available.

3. State Program and State Board Overview

A. State Agency Organization

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

The six core programs are housed within two different state agencies. Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner–Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs are housed in the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. Adult Education and Family Literacy is housed in the Wyoming Community College Commission.

Both agencies work closely with the state workforce development board, referred to in Wyoming as the Wyoming Workforce Development Council. The Council advises the Governor on workforce priorities and initiatives while also overseeing workforce activities across the state. The Council also works with Workforce Services and the Community College Commission in developing and implementing the federally mandated State Plan under WIOA. Wyoming has been designated as a single–area state; therefore, the Council serves as both the local board and the State board.

Wyoming’s Workforce portion of WIOA is administered by the Employment and Training Division, within the Office of Workforce Programs, of the Department of Workforce Services. Workforce Services is focused on delivering comprehensive and effective services that build a workforce to meet the changing demands of Wyoming’s diverse businesses, citizens, and economy. Workforce Services strives to maximize its resources and identify ways to respond to new challenges and possibilities. The Department’s positive relationships with employers, communities, and job seekers are its most valuable assets.

The Employment and Training Division is dedicated to meeting the employment and training needs of Wyoming’s workforce and employers in ever–changing economic conditions. To accomplish this, the Division’s plans and activities are guided by the Employment and Training Team, which is composed of American Job Center managers and program managers. This group provides oversight for all Division policies and procedures. It also provides unified guidance to staff and partner organizations for service delivery, aligns workforce activities, distributes workload, and meets or exceeds performance goals. The program managers are responsible for all Division programs, including WIOA. They also provide individual program direction.

Most direct assistance to employers and workers is provided under the guidance of center managers, through the Division’s 20 American Job Centers, as part of the American Job Center system. The American Job Centers, which are located throughout Wyoming, use a One–Stop concept that coordinates the Division’s services with services available through partner organizations, in a single location where possible. Where a single location is not possible, the services are effectively coordinated through other means. The members of the Division also engage in cross–divisional work to improve services to customers.

Organizational Chart – DWS

Organizational Chart – WCCC

B. State Board

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

See sections B. State Board 1. Membership Roster and 2. Board Activities.

i. Membership Roster

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

Affiliation	Name
Governor	Matthew H. Mead – Designee: Merit Thomas
State Legislature	Senator Michael VonFlatern – Legislator and Business Representative
State Legislature	Representative Robert McKim – Legislator
Business	Brenda Birkle
Business	Jim Engel
Business	Dr. Ray Fleming–Dinneen
Business	Kevin Kershisnik
Business	Leonard Scoleri
Business	John Walsh
Business	Keith Zabka
Business	Gary New
Business	Katie Legerski
Business	Fabian Lobera
Business	Sid Gressette
Business	Randal Six

Business	Mark Madsen
Business	Ron Van Voast
Workforce	Rocky Anderson
Workforce	Tony Haller
Workforce	Scott Norris
Workforce	Shannon Buller
Workforce	Stacy Strasser
Workforce	Larry Barttelbort
Government	John Cox
Government	Delbert McOmie
Government	Felix Carrizales
Government	Dr. Jim Rose

ii. Board Activities

Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC) has been working from the Governor's Vision, Goals, and Strategies (below) to meet Wyoming's education, training, and employment needs. Each committee of the WWDC has been assigned applicable goals and strategies and have begun work to meet those goals. The WIOA Finance and Compliance committee has tackled the Eligible Training Provider List and will continuously be working to review and update the Department of Workforce Services, Employment and Training Division's policies based upon WIOA Law and Rules and Regulations. The Career Pathways and Apprenticeship Services Committee has been working to review and update Career Pathways to meet the needs of Wyoming's current and future employers. New Sector Strategies are being pursued in industries and occupations that will help diversify and support our economy. The Sector Strategies process is being reviewed and best practices are being reviewed for implementation in the coming months. Each committee meets on a monthly basis via conference call and the full WWDC meets on a quarterly basis in a preselected Wyoming city or town. Through this meeting schedule the WWDC and staff will be able to meet the goals as provided by Governor Mead and WIOA law in an efficient and timely manner.

Wyoming's workforce development system will be fundamental in supporting robust regional and state economies and in producing a high-quality workforce valued by Wyoming employers.

GOAL 1: Ensure Wyoming employers have access to a skilled, high-quality workforce in today's changing economy

1.1: Engage the business community and align education and workforce training opportunities with the needs of Wyoming employers.

1.2 Ensure training is predicated upon a labor market need by using employer feedback, labor market information, and sector strategy input.

1.3 Expand efforts to recruit and retain workers.

Strategies:

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council Executive Committee shall focus on the state's most significant short- and long-term workforce development priorities that should inform the full Board's priorities (1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

Create, foster, and expand sector strategies based upon input provided by employers and data provided by Wyoming Research and Planning (1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

A sector strategy subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall oversee sector strategy activities and identify new industries that need sector strategies (1.1,1.2).

Organize and host the annual Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit to further develop relationships with employers and furnish them with information related to the services of the workforce development system (1.1).

Quarterly supply-and-demand labor market information reports shall be provided to the Workforce Development Council (1.2).

Cultivate partnerships between sector strategies and apprenticeship programs (1.1).

Continue to strengthen the Wyoming Grown program with targeted marketing efforts to recruit Wyoming natives back to the state (1.3).

Work with economic development entities to develop practices aimed at retaining workers (1.1, 1.3).

GOAL 2: Ensure all Wyoming people who want to work have access to an open, streamlined, and effective workforce development system

2.1 Maximize core program coordination.

2.2 Utilize Career Pathways as an umbrella model in One-Stop centers.

2.3 Evaluate efforts to ensure that training and education requirements match the state's labor market needs.

2.4 Work to reduce barriers to employment for underrepresented populations.

Strategies:

Develop a marketing plan to create awareness about services offered by One-Stop centers (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

To ensure accountability and transparency of funding, core programs shall provide a joint annual report to the Workforce Development Council which demonstrates administrative-to-program costs and program performance to help the Council identify opportunities for fund allocation (2.1).

A Career Pathways subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall be formed to oversee the development of Career Pathways activities (2.1, 2.2).

Labor market analysis and the needs communicated by employers should inform ongoing One-Stop system planning and development (2.2, 2.3).

Employer education efforts regarding the benefits of hiring underrepresented workforce populations should be expanded (2.4).

Continue to develop and enhance programs that incentivize employment of underrepresented workforce populations (2.4).

Utilize integrated training and education programs as a way to more efficiently move adults in need of literacy skills or high school equivalency certificates into the workplace (2.4).

GOAL 3: Prepare all Wyoming youth to be both career and college ready

3.1 Work with Governor's policy teams to enhance efforts to improve communication, coordination, and collaboration in preparing youth for post-secondary studies or the world of work.

3.2 Incorporate a Career Pathways system as a model to better guide young people.

3.3 Incorporate pre-apprenticeship programs to offer young people opportunities to gain technical skills that are best learned on the job.

3.4 Disseminate information regarding future in-demand labor market needs.

Strategies:

Promote career exploration through Career Pathways so young people can acquire educational, technical, and social skills that enhance career development (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4).

Work with education partners and stakeholders to develop assessment tools and information regarding Career Pathways to youth (3.1, 3.2).

Provide opportunities for employers and industry representatives to connect with young people (3.1, 3.3).

Develop pre-apprenticeship strategies with the Wyoming Office of Registered Apprenticeship to foster a future pipeline of skilled workers (3.3).

Create a communication outreach method that targets youth, parents, educators, and other stakeholders (3.1).

Using labor market information and input from the business community, communicate future labor market needs to community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and other training entities and stakeholders (3.4)

4. Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-stop Program Partners

A. Assessment of Core Programs

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

The Department of Workforce Services will assess Title I WIOA, Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs using two forms of assessment -- performance outcomes on a quarterly and annual basis, and a monitoring sampling process.

The primary focus of the performance outcomes in this plan is on the mandated measures for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth populations served through WIOA.

The measured outcomes are reported within performance tables required by Employment and Training Administration reporting requirements. In addition to these regular Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth common measure outcomes, veterans, individuals who are receiving public assistance, disabled individuals, displaced homemakers, and older individuals are included in the performance outcomes as special populations.

The performance results compare adults and dislocated workers who received training services, as opposed to those who received only intensive services. The comparison pertains to the outcomes for entered employment, employment retention, and average earnings. The results are particularly useful when viewed for a period spanning years.

Workforce Services also will use informative data for adults and dislocated workers on 12-month employment retention and earnings increases, placements in non-traditional employment, wages at entry into unsubsidized employment, and the relationship between training received and a participant's entry into unsubsidized employment.

Reporting focused outcomes for veterans pertain to priority of service, and measure outcomes as they apply to post 911-era veterans and Tap Workshop Veterans.

The Department of Workforce Services also will use a monitoring sampling process. This process will allow for a structured random sample that is statistically valid. This algorithm allows Workforce Services to do a truly statistical random sample from the pool of

individuals in WIOA at any point during the previous program year. The Department has found this process to be of great value. This sample was enhanced during the PY14 year with a component to verify that enough files are pulled in the sample to represent the file population of an office. This was implemented to make sure each office was being monitored as effectively as possible in order to identify potential issues and provide the appropriate level of technical assistance. To go along with the sampling process, a new report helps center managers see trends collected data during monitoring. Each office will be responsible for a corrective action plan based on the information collected. Each plan is then reviewed for effectiveness in addressing deficiencies and is approved by the WIOA monitor and program manager. Each file receives a monitoring report specific to that case, detailing compliance or deficiencies found in the file. The report helps the center manager see the overall picture for the office and requires the office to collaborate with the administration to address compliance issues.

Additional training will be developed for case file documentation. The Division's training group also will continue creating training modules to address issues identified in monitoring. The training modules are available through an online training site the State of Wyoming provides for its agencies. The Employment and Training Division will strive for continuous improvement in many areas, emphasizing attention to detail in case management and technical assistance provided from the program managers, as subject matter experts.

Adult Education will assess Title II of WIOA, Adult Education, and Family Literacy, by using the following forms of assessment. Factors will include quality, effectiveness, and program improvements by providers.

Data quality and monthly desk review. This report will review National Reporting System data required by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. The data will be checked for errors and progress toward meeting performance targets.

Program monitoring and site visits. These activities will use an evidence-based compliance document that includes intake, student eligibility, intensity and duration of services, educational and career counseling, high-quality program personnel, staff professional development plans, assessment, student files, partnerships and cooperative planning, facilities and accessibility, data management system, and fiscal review.

Quarterly narratives will report on successes and challenges facing the program provider. Quarterly updates to the Career Pathways plans will assess how partnerships can be strengthened, resources shared, and overall programs improved.

Program improvement goals. Each program will develop program improvement goals based on program surveys and National Reporting System data analyses. These are monitored mid-year and at a program's end.

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 1998, requires each state to conduct a needs assessment every three years. The purpose is to identify and understand the needs of individuals with disabilities in the State and to use that information to make appropriate operational and program adjustments to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of services.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation conducts a statewide comprehensive needs assessment every three years. The most recent was started in 2012 and completed in April 2013.

The 2012 needs assessment was conducted statewide by the Division and the State Rehabilitation Council. It examined the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state. It also described the rehabilitation needs of people with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation needs of:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their needs for supported employment services;
2. Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have not been served, or are underserved, by the Vocational Rehabilitation Program carried out under this Title, and;
3. Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system (other than the Vocational Rehabilitation Program), as identified by such individuals and people assisting them.

The State's goals and priorities are based on an analysis of:

1. State performance on the standards and indicators established under Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act;
2. Other available information on the operation and the effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program carried out in the State, and;
3. Any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council under Section 105(c), and the findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107.

Results of the 2012 needs assessment helped the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation evaluate its priorities and establish a plan to guide future rehabilitation program development. The goal is to provide the foundation for an action plan that identifies opportunities for improving the services that are provided to people with disabilities.

Methodology

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation contracted with the Center for Public Policy and Administration at the University of Utah to assist with the 2012–2013 needs assessment.

The contractor was asked to complete an overall assessment of the need for services in the State of Wyoming and make suggestions for improvement.

The needs assessment was designed using five general methodological approaches:

1. Estimates of target populations through analysis of the 2010 Census, the American Community Survey, and Social Security Administration data;
2. Analysis of Division administrative data, including 911 service data, and consumer satisfaction data, if available;

3. Focus groups with individuals whose cases have been closed in successful (26) or unsuccessful status (28);
4. Mail surveys with Division customers; and
5. Electronic online surveys with Division staff, Department of Workforce Services staff, American Job Centers, Association of Providers – Community Rehabilitation Programs, Department of Education – Special Education Staff, Department of Health – Behavioral and Mental Health, Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation, and other service providers.

Throughout the process, the study was designed to obtain input from stakeholders. A stakeholders' group formed at the beginning of the contract included members of the State Rehabilitation Council and employees of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The contractor team worked with the stakeholders' group during the project to plan and make course corrections throughout the study. Interactions occurred in person, via email, and by phone calls. State Rehabilitation Council members provided input on framing the research questions, interpreting Division program performance data, and refining provider and consumer surveys. Once the data was collected and a preliminary analysis completed, the stakeholder group reviewed the draft document to help interpret the findings prior to the contractor finalizing the report.

This collaborative approach is consistent with the intent of the Rehabilitation Act; that is, for the State Rehabilitation Council to direct the statewide needs assessment process. The approach also ensures that the results are more likely to be used because the end-users are invested in the process.

The following research questions guided this comprehensive statewide needs assessment for individuals with disabilities:

1. What are population estimates and characteristics of individuals with disabilities in Wyoming? How do these compare with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation customers?
2. What are estimates and characteristics of individuals who receive Social Security disability benefits (SSDI and SSI)? How do these compare with Division customers?
3. How do the processes and outcomes of Wyoming vocational rehabilitation services compare with other states? What are the anomalies and are these of concern?
4. What do vocational rehabilitation customers perceive as their unmet needs and barriers to successful outcomes?
5. What do rehabilitation providers perceive as unmet needs and barriers to successful outcomes for their customers? How do provider perceptions of needs and barriers compare with the customers' perceptions?
6. What groups appear to be unserved or underserved by vocational rehabilitation services? What are the unmet service needs of these groups?
7. What are barriers and special service needs of racial and ethnic minority populations with disabilities?

Findings

Based on the information collected, analyzed, and presented, specific areas warrant attention as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation develops its next state plan. The following highlights a few items the researchers observed. The Division needs to determine, based on input from its State Rehabilitation Council and the public, key areas on which to focus its state efforts over the next few years.

The service needs that are requested most by consumers with the most significant disabilities include job search assistance; education and training; and career/job decision-making and selection. These needs are very similar to the top three cited by providers: career/job decision-making and selection; life skills training; and job search assistance. Providers rate consumers' needs for life skills training higher than consumers rated it, which may be a reflection of providers' experience. In looking at the availability of the most needed services, providers perceive life skills training as not easily obtainable. The Division may want to increase the capacity of its support services in this domain.

Counselors' heavy caseloads impact the quality of services. Limited interaction and delays between appointments could be impacting customers' enthusiasm about the vocational rehabilitation process and negatively impacting outcomes.

Providers responding to the survey felt that the following were the top unserved or underserved populations in Wyoming: People with mental illness and substance abuse problems, young adults/transition, and intellectual/developmental and cognitive disabilities. Provider recommendations to address the unserved and underserved populations include improving Division services (such as reducing caseload sizes and increasing counselors' knowledge of community resources), and improving education/outreach services (including building community awareness, improving collaboration with other agencies, and more funding, especially increased funding for services).

Customers need assistance in understanding benefits and the impact of employment on benefits. Consumers and providers both identified a lack of knowledge about the impact of employment earnings on benefits. Recent studies indicate that benefits planning services are correlated with higher earnings for vocational rehabilitation customers.

One factor impacting customers' understanding of their benefits is the lack of Social Security Administration-approved, certified work incentive coordinators in Wyoming. These coordinators go through a rigorous training and testing process to become certified. Community rehabilitation programs can obtain such training from the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance National Training Center at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Qualifications of Division of Vocation Rehabilitation service providers for supported employment are a concern expressed in the focus groups and both surveys. The Division's policy manual requires Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities accreditation. However, based on discussions with the working group and Division staff, it is clear that not all providers have it. In part, this appears to be due to the working definition of "provider." The meaning of "community rehabilitation program" has evolved as the demand for community-based services has increased. Although the accreditation "assists service providers to improve the quality of their services," it can be an expensive and difficult process. This makes it difficult for smaller providers to obtain better training. At the same time, some respondents expressed concerns about provider skill levels. At present, there is no alternative process to assess the quality of providers.

A 2015 needs assessment has been conducted, and the results are currently being compiled by the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center at the University of Wyoming. Results are not yet available.

B. Assessment of One-stop Partner Programs

Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals. Registered Apprenticeship

Office of Apprenticeship uses the Rapids system, a live database that documents movement of Registered Apprenticeship programs, the number of programs per fiscal year, apprenticeships registered, apprenticeships canceled, apprenticeships completed, programs registered, and programs canceled due to no apprentice activity, and so forth. The office is under constant scrutiny for program validity, program numbers, apprentice completions, the addition of occupations, etc.

All apprenticeship programs that register with the Office of Apprenticeship are monitored in Rapids, as are all apprentices registered in a U.S. Department of Labor approved/registered program. A request could be made to ensure, with the development of the new and improved Rapids system that required reports may be developed for required reporting purposes

Federal reporting for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibilities program is measured in participation rates, which is defined as the rate at which the State engages families receiving cash assistance and participating in countable work activities. Two participation rates are measured.

- All families rate – mandated to meet 50 percent of total participation rate.
- Two-parent families' rate – mandated to meet 90 percent of total participation rate.

As of September 2015, participation rates for the program year October 2014 to September 2015 averaged 75.3 percent for all families and 81.3 percent for two-parent families. During the period, the Employment and Training Division provided POWER services to an average of 146 families per month -- 128 single parent families and nine two-parent families.

C. Previous Assessment Results

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of an assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

Previous assessment results will be included beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications.

D. Evaluation

Describe how the state will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

Any such research projects or evaluations identified by the Wyoming Workforce Development Council will be assigned to a subcommittee and coordinated with the respective core program administrators. The State's Labor Market Information/Research and Planning division will be an integral part of determining potential projects and the effectiveness of the programs.

5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

A. for Title I Programs

For Title I programs, provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

i. Youth Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3),

Wyoming follows section 128(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 29–14 to formula allocate funding for Youth Program activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

1. The average number of unemployed individuals for the preceding 12– month period.
2. The number of excess unemployed individuals for the preceding 12–month period.
3. The number of economically disadvantaged youth (age 16 to 21, excluding college students in the workforce and military).

The State applies the 90 percent “hold harmless” provision contained in WIOA, Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii).

ii. Adult and Training Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3),

Wyoming follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 29–14 to formula allocate funding for Adult Program activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

1. The average number of unemployed individuals for the preceding 12–month period.
2. The number of excess unemployed individuals for the preceding 12–month period.

3. The number of economically disadvantaged adults (age 18 to 72, excluding college students in the workforce and military).

The State applies the 90 percent “hold harmless” provision contained in WIOA, Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii).

iii. Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) and Based on Data and Weights Assigned.

Wyoming follows section 133(b)(2)(A)(i) and TEGL 29-14 to formula allocate funding for dislocated worker activities. The data used in computing allotments includes:

1. The average number of unemployed individuals for the preceding 12-month period.
2. The number of excess unemployed individuals for the preceding 12-month period.
3. The average number of long-term unemployed for the preceding 12-month period.

As authorized in WIOA section 133(b)(4), and TEGL 29-14, Wyoming transferred 60 percent of Dislocated Worker Program activities funds to Adult activities funding for the program year 2015 and will continue to evaluate percentages of transferable amounts in the future.

The State applies the 90 percent “hold harmless” provision contained in WIOA, Section 128(b)(2)(A)(ii).

In compliance with WIOA section 133(b)(2)(B) regarding the distribution of funds for Dislocated Worker (DW) Employment and Training activities to local One Stops, the DW participant allocations to each office are calculated using an allocation formula consisting of labor force, unemployment, and poverty levels. Each of these data elements are calculated for each county in the state to determine the percentage each county will receive as a portion of funding for that county. If a One-Stop serves more than one county, each county’s total is summed and the total shall be the allocation for that area. DWS does assure that the local One Stop shall not receive an allocation percentage for fiscal year 2016 or a subsequent fiscal year that is less than 90 percent of the average allocation percentage of the One Stop for the 2 preceding fiscal years.

Policy has been updated to reflect that each area/Workforce Center is guaranteed to receive an allocation percentage for a year that is no less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for the prior two years.

B. For Title II

i. Multi-year Grants or Contracts

Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.

The Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) is the eligible agency that administers the Adult Education and Family Literacy grant funding and provides oversight to local programs and monitors performance.

Adult Education and literacy providers approved under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 who were funded in the 2015-16 transition year will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017. They are expected to follow the State and federal guidance and expectations as measured through the annual application, financial reports and their program performance in meeting the state negotiated targets approved by Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE).

The WCCC will implement a new competition during the 2016-2017 grant year. WCCC will advertise the request-for-proposals (RFP) as a three-year competitive grant to all eligible providers in Wyoming for the purpose of developing, implementing, and improving adult education across the state. The same RFP will be posted electronically on the WCCC website and advertised in newspapers across the state.

Our plan is to use the same announcement procedure for all competitions for Adult Education. The thirteen considerations in awarding grants (WIOA Section 231(e)) will be included in the proposal, in the readers' rubric, and will be used in awarding the grants.)

Organizations eligible to apply must have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals. These organizations may include: a local education agency; a community- or faith-based organization; a volunteer literacy organization; an institution of higher education; a public or private nonprofit agency; a library; a public housing authority; a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services; a consortium or coalition of agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

The anticipated timeline will include the following:

- January 2017 - RFP finalized and published, Readers instructions and rubric created, bidders conference held.
- February 2017 - Technical assistance given to potential providers with Q & A posted for public view on WCCC - AE website.
- February - March 2017 - Rubric and instructions for local review by the WWDC of application for alignment with the WIOA state plan.
- February - March 2017 - Recruit readers to review and score AEFLA grant applications
- April 2017 - Applications for AEFLA grant due
- April 2017 - Reviewers score grant applications
- May 2017 - Review budgets and other grant requirements and announce grant recipients and awards.
- July 1, 2017 providers begin grant cycle, programming and funding.

The WCCC will use a performance-based funding allocation model. It will consider the following elements: enrollment, high-school dropout rate, poverty level, rural/isolated areas, performance, and targeted populations.

A minimum of three years of history on the organization's management of grants and an organizational chart containing the Adult Education program will be required. This will ensure potential new programs provide background and experience that include services tailored for the main population(s) and the area served. The request-for-proposals will also require a description of the project management, which will help to ensure successful outcomes.

Each prospective provider will be requested to provide data demonstrating the capacity to serve eligible Adult Education program students and providers' previous effectiveness in helping students make measurable educational gains.

Intensity and duration of instruction will be considered as programs are reviewed. Quality instruction must be provided by high-quality instructors to ensure programs meet negotiated performance targets.

ii. Ensure Direct and Equitable Access

Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers.

Requests for proposals will be issued only once per cycle and the same announcement will be used in advertising the request for proposal both electronically and in print. All applicants for Adult Education funds will use the same form for a response.

Direct and equitable access will be ensured by requesting that all applicants, prior recipients, and new applicants provide data demonstrating their ability to help students make a measurable academic gain. Prior recipients will use data from LACES (the Adult Education student data management system for the State of Wyoming) to show how they met state-negotiated performance measures for all student levels, as well as for English Language Learners. New organizations will be provided forms to show demonstrated student learning gain, including low-literacy level and English Language Learners. Applicants will also be required to explain how they will demonstrate that students have the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary education, skills training, or employment.

C. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

Wyoming's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is a combined agency and does not have a separate designated State agency for individuals who are blind.

6. Program Data

A. Data Alignment and Integration

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

i. Describe the State's Plans to Make the Management Information Systems for the Core Programs Interoperable to Maximize the Efficient Exchange of Common Data Elements to Support Assessment and Evaluation.

Wyoming continues to work towards data alignment and integration across the six core programs, unemployment insurance, and the state's education systems. Several core programs and future combined plan programs are already integrated from an intake, case management, and reporting perspective. The integrated programs are Wagner-Peyser, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, and Veterans. Presently, management information systems are not fully interoperable. However, for research purposes, including evaluation, Research and Planning's data (illustrated in the graphic, "Research & Planning's Administrative Records Data Providers") either is, or will be, integrated across Social Security numbers and student identifiers, for descriptive analysis, and predictive, and explanatory purposes. As the graphic shows, Research and Planning obtains student records, including personally identifiable information, from all of public education for research and evaluation, including WIOA purposes. Employer information is collected quarterly from unemployment insurance and workers' compensation records. Administrative records for research purposes are collected on a weekly, quarterly, semester, and annual basis. WIOA participant records are acquired quarterly, while Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education are collected annually. Beginning with PY 2016, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation records will be collected on a quarterly basis. Research and Planning's established data collection and management system will be sustained by Workforce Services to evaluate performance, provide user-friendly information, and enhance knowledge about the workforce system. Research and Planning's data collection and management system will also be used under WIOA to meet longitudinal tracking and evaluation research requirements.

ii. Describe the State's Plans to Integrate Data Systems to Facilitate Streamlined Intake and Service Delivery to Track Participation Across All Programs Included in This Plan.

The Department of Workforce Services, in coordination with the Community College Commission, developed and a business case* detailing a plan to obtain a unified software system that will serve participants as they navigate through the WIOA system of offerings. At a minimum, the software will include common intake, assessment of needs, referral management, customer relationship management, and joint Federal reporting and analytics among multiple State programs and agencies. The proposed system, WIOA Common Intake, Referral,

and Reporting System, will serve as a single point of intake, referral, customer relationship management, reporting and analytics. This will enable consistent tracking, referral, reporting, and analytics while allowing each program to continue using its existing program-specific case management system.

The Department of Workforce Services and Community College Commission staffs, along with the Wyoming Department of Enterprise Technology Services, will continue to explore options for streamlining intake and service delivery through the best use of technology. This work is contingent upon potential future funding since existing funds are not available for this project.

*A copy of the WIOA Technology Business Case is available upon request by contacting Jamie Mathis, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services.

- iii. Explain How the State Board Will Assist the Governor in Aligning Technology and Data Systems Across Required One-stop Partner Programs (including Design and Implementation of Common Intake, Data Collection, Etc.) and How Such Alignment Will Improve Service Delivery to Individuals, Including Unemployed Individuals.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council will work in conjunction with the Department of Workforce Services and the Community College Commission to provide research and recommendations to the Governor regarding technology alignment across the mandatory One-Stop partner programs. This will be an extension of Wyoming's "no wrong door" philosophy, which enables customers across all of the core programs and mandatory partners to experience a streamlined and more seamless service delivery model.

- iv. Describe the State's Plans to Develop and Produce the Reports Required Under Section 116, Performance Accountability System. (wioa Section 116(d)(2)).

The core programs' management information systems operate with vendor-managed solutions. Each vendor is contractually responsible to develop and provide the required data outputs for Federal performance accountability reporting under WIOA. The Research and Planning section may be able to provide additional support through its participation in the Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant from U.S. Department of Labor. Wyoming also is working on a state longitudinal data system. However, an implementation date is unknown at this time.

B. Assessment of Participants' Post-program Success

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

In addition to the required Federal reports, the core programs plan to work with the Research and Planning section to further assess participant's post-program success. All data sets in Research and Planning's system of administrative records are either linked longitudinally or are consistently linked for longitudinal analysis on a project-by-project basis. Quarterly and weekly unemployment insurance administrative records are maintained from 1992 and are updated weekly and quarterly. Cohort analysis of nurses employed in

the state dates to 2001, while student records for cohort analysis are available from 2006 to the most recent semester. The strategy of longitudinal cohort analysis will be carried into the implementation of WIOA and focus on program participants and the balance of Wyoming's population by demographic characteristic workforce participation and earnings.

C. Use of Unemployment Insurance (ui) Wage Record Data

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

Chronology of selected Research and Planning publications for linked administrative records

- Tracking University of Wyoming Graduates into the Wyoming Workforce, September 1995.
- Under the Lamppost: Report to Workforce Development Council on Wyoming Institutions of Higher Education Program Completers, November 1998.
- Workforce Development and Community College Outcomes; and When Does Training Pay Off? Wyoming Labor Force Trends, July 2001.
- The Effects of a College Degree on Wages: The Different Experiences of Men and Women, October 2001.
- Where Are They Now? Wyoming Community College Graduates' Labor Market Outcomes 2004, August 2004.
- Cooking Up a Career: Examining the Outcomes of a High School Training Program in the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management, August 2005
- Wyoming Community College Graduates' Labor Market Outcomes 2005: An Administrative Records Approach, April 2006
- Retention of Nurses in Wyoming: Part II, August 2008
- Job Attainment and Wages of Wyoming Vocational Rehabilitation Participants, Wyoming Labor Force Trends, February 2010
- Driven by Demographics: Examining Employee Exits in State Government, Wyoming Labor Force Trends, December 2010
- Health Care Workforce Needs in Wyoming: Advancing the Study, Occasional Paper No. 6, Fall 2011
- Monitoring School District Human Resource Cost Pressures, Fall 2013
- Effects of Decline in Teen Drivers, Wyoming Labor Force Trends, September 2014
- Nurses Returning to School: Motivation and Job Satisfaction as a Buffer between Perceived Employer Discouragement and Time Constraints, Fall 2014

Administrative records-based research strategies are the most efficient and effective available for labor market information (LMI). Wage records linked to other administrative records are ubiquitous in Wyoming's LMI program.

Process evaluation (i.e., documenting how WIOA programs are implemented) during PY 2016 will precede impact evaluations beginning in PY 2017. During PY 2016, employers will receive the New Hires occupational skills survey for each participant. Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are scheduled for the first impact analysis.

The Wyoming Unemployment Insurance Program (UI) within Department of Workforce Services will continue to work with both mandatory partners and other public entities to share wage data when appropriate. The Program will accomplish this through initial discussions, and ongoing negotiations. UI will continue to ascertain the data sharing needs expressed by our partners, and determine whether the requested data is able to be shared under 20 CFR 603. The UI Program will ask each potential recipient for a proposal to detail what information is sought and how information would be shared.

TEGL 7-16 has provided guidance for various ways data sharing may be managed. Wyoming's current process is moving in the direction of Option 3, which gives Adult Education, Unemployment Insurance and the state workforce agency input into the reporting process. Since Wyoming's vocational rehabilitation agency reports to the same administrator as does the workforce agency, reporting efforts may also be easily coordinated with vocational rehabilitation. Wyoming will continue to work toward a situation where the SEA may designate the SWA as its authorized representative and all parties will otherwise comply with the written agreement and reasonable methods requirements in 34 CFR 99.35 and is consistent with 20 CFR 603.10. In the event Option 3 will not work technically, Wyoming will pursue closely related alternatives such as Option 2.

D. Privacy Safeguards

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

The Department of Workforce Services implements multiple layers of security to meet State and Federal data compliance measures and policies, and to protect client information from unauthorized access or disclosure and possible misuse or abuse. The Department uses the latest Internet technology standards to encrypt and secure all Web application traffic. Client Social Security numbers submitted through Web applications are obfuscated during receipt in the database. Servers housing the databases containing SSNs are "single-purpose restricted" to cleared system administrators. All database backups are encrypted using the most current standards. Only authorized Workforce Services program staff can view applicant/trainee information through a highly secure software interface. Authorized staff members are instructed on the appropriate handling and protection of this data by their management or designated representative.

The Department of Workforce Services is working closely with the Wyoming Community College Commission to obtain direction from the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education. When clarification is issued by that office, the Wyoming Community College Commission will share the guidance with the Department of Workforce Services so those requirements may be implemented to comply with all

applicable Federal laws. The staff of the Wyoming Community College Commission is in frequent contact with Workforce Service's Office of Workforce Programs.

The Wyoming Unemployment Insurance Program (UI) will safeguard wage and other data by following applicable State and Federal Laws and Regulations. The most detailed and determinative of these regulations is 20 CFR 603. The required safeguards and security requirements for disclosed information will be followed by UI. In addition, UI will require all entities who successfully obtain a data sharing agreement with UI to enter into a memorandum of understanding or other equally binding instrument, to insure the regulatory and statutory safeguards are maintained. This will include, but not be limited to, requiring the recipient to safeguard the information disclosed, allow UI to audit the recipient to insure compliance with the agreement, and limit or prohibit disclosure of confidential information.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation adheres to 34 CFR Part 361.38 with regard to the disclosure of client data. All clients, applicants, or client representatives shall be informed of the Division's need to collect certain personal information and policies governing its use and confidentiality. All client or applicant information acquired as a part of the rehabilitation process shall remain the property of the Division and is strictly confidential. Client information shall only be used for purposes directly related to the administration of the individual's vocational rehabilitation program. This information cannot be shared with anyone except Division staff, without the informed written consent of the client.

All Research and Planning MOUs (see web link located here: http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/education_we_connect.htm) involving personally identifiable information or employer records meet all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Privacy Act, 20 CFR Part 603, and all domain specific (e.g., medical board or board of nursing) State and Federal statutes, rules, and data donor standards regarding confidentiality. Confidentiality is further assured by limiting staff access to confidential information, Federal and State confidentiality and security standards training, exposure to strategies to maximize richly detailed publication while employing standard screening techniques, and by a culture of confidentiality and security within the Research and Planning section. Security must meet National Institute of Standards and Technology requirements, including a program of external audits.

The Adult Education program follows FERPA for all student records. FERPA is a Federal law that guards the privacy of student education records. It is applied to all schools that receive funds under any applicable programs of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Act also affords certain rights to parents with respect to their child's education records. These rights are offered to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or enters schooling beyond the high school level. Any student who receives these rights is deemed an "eligible student" under FERPA.

Adult Education staff requires written permission from the eligible student or guardian on a release-of-information form before any student's records can be shared. There are certain exceptions whereby FERPA permits an academic institution to disclose certain types of "directory" information. However, a student or guardian has the right to request this information not be disclosed. The Adult Education staff is trained on the privacy rights of their students.

7. Priority of Service for Veterans

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

Being a veteran is not automatically regarded as a barrier to employment, except as described by Veterans Program Letter (VPL) 03-14, 03-14, Change 1 and 03-14 Change 2, which adds specific eligible veterans or spouses as having a significant barrier to employment. Clients in this category face some challenges that become barriers. The Employment and Training Division extends priority of service to all veterans it serves and works to appropriately address individual barriers that they face. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialists specifically provide services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who meet the following criteria: A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1) and (3); special disabled and disabled veterans are those: who are entitled to compensation (or who, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability; A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. I 1302(a) and (b)), as amended; A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months; An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration; A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or A low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36)).

Continued emphasis is placed on serving the needs of veterans. This is done through priority of service in each American Job Center. In addition, initiatives such as the Gold Card Program. For the Gold Card program, post-9/11 veterans, upon identification to American Job Center staff, received intensive services to help them obtain employment. Initial services are followed up by monthly contacts for six months, or until the clients become employed.

Veteran job seekers are identified through the intake process upon entering an American Job Center. The initial point of reception verifies the following veteran status:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(1) and (3); special disabled and disabled veterans are those: who are entitled to compensation (or who, but for the receipt of military retired pay, would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or, were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. I 1302(a) and (b)), as amended;

- A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C § 4211(6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months;
- An offender, as defined by WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration;
- A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
- A low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36)).

A veteran initially assessed by Wagner-Peyser staff as meeting the aforementioned criteria are referred to the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist for comprehensive assessment and the provision of intensive services. Specialists assess client needs and determine eligibility for the appropriate occupational skills or educational programs, and determine appropriate funding sources.

The Department of Workforce Services has refocused its efforts through the American Job Centers by ensuring that all eligible veterans receive the maximum priority of services. This includes employment, training, and placement services in job-training programs and opportunities. American Job Centers provide a myriad of labor exchange activities for employers and eligible veterans. They provide career and training services, as well as implement required performance measures used to evaluate veterans services.

Both Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program staff are fully integrated into the labor exchange activities of the American Job Centers throughout the state. With the One-Stop delivery system, a variety of public agencies are co-located within many of the American Job Centers. These include the Wyoming Department of Family Services, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Job Corps, Workers' Compensation, Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Senior Employment Service grantees, and other agencies that provide Wyoming veterans with access to services and "hands-on" personalized assistance.

American Job Center staffs coordinate and facilitate various participating partners in the One-Stop centers to promote employment, training, and placement services to veterans. The American Job Centers' goal is to continue building strong community systems by expanding and solidifying established working relationships among local businesses and qualified veterans. The American Job Centers work to expand continuously their partnership bases and to identify viable new partners within their regions.

Disabled Veteran Outreach Program staff and Local Veterans Employment Representative staff members fully integrated into the American Job Centers and fall under the same personnel rules as other State employees. They are included among the American Job Center partner staff, which consists of all staff employed by programs or activities operated by the American Job Center partners listed in 29 U.S.C. 2841(b). These programs provide online and in-person workforce development or related support services as part of the workforce development system. Other American Job Center partner staff members include staff of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and network partner programs.

Many of Wyoming's American Job Centers do not have permanent Disabled Veteran Outreach Program or Local Veterans Employment Representative staff. Veterans outreach services are provided by DVOP staff in person or by phone when necessary. Employer outreach services conducted by Local Veterans Employment Representative staff are provided in person or by phone.

Networking within the state is done at job fairs, Workforce Development Council meetings, local chambers of commerce, Wyoming Business Council meetings, and with many other groups that provide employment services to veterans. Outreach activities and public information are provided at numerous state expositions, job fairs, and association conventions, and via employer contacts for job development and job placement matches. Partnerships for transition assistance and reintegration are strong with the Veterans Administration and state Vocational Rehabilitation Program, homeless programs, reintegration organizations, and F.E. Warren Air Force Base.

All veterans who come into an office have a personal interview with Workforce Services staff. The interview explores job opportunities and determines if any significant barriers to employment warrant a referral to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialist. Case management may be required to assist veterans in making employment decisions. Both Workforce Services and the State of Wyoming websites have veterans' pages and list veteran's services.

The Veterans Outreach Program supports state strategies through implementation of Federal guidance for Veterans Employment and Training Services and integration into the State workforce agency, based on the Jobs for Veterans State Plan for fiscal years 2015-2019. The Veterans Employment and Training Program manager receives training through seminars, phone conferences, and other means by U.S. Department of Labor personnel and other workforce experts. The program manager, in turn, advises American Job Center personnel and others about the program to insure continuity of operations and service. Furthermore, regular phone conferences occur for Disabled Outreach Veteran Program staff and Local Veterans Employment Representative staff.

The Wyoming at Work system has an emphasis on Veterans' Priority of Service, thereby providing opportunities so veterans and their spouses know this priority exists. All divisions within the Department of Workforce Services, Employment and Training Division will continue to work with their partners to increase outreach efforts to these populations.

Each workforce center has posted information visible to all clients describing Priority of Service to notify all that Priority of Service is in place. All staff have been trained in Priority of Service and act to identify qualified veterans during intake. All staff are trained to ask if the client is a veteran and if so to provide services to qualified veterans before equally qualified non-veterans, from there follow up with clients' needs while in the workforce center. Reminders of Priority of Service are taught to all staff through conference calls, emails, in person, and when JVSG program staff are meeting with workforce center staff during outreach. To ensure Priority of Service is being complied with, program managers will review requirements of Priority of Service with their staff on Priority of Service on an ongoing basis. Any training of staff will be conducted by the State Veterans Coordinator.

Monitoring the implementation of priority of service will be done to ensure that eligible veterans and eligible spouses are made aware of and afforded priority of service. Monitoring will be performed by the State Veterans Coordinator. The State Veterans Coordinator is responsible for training all staff on priority of service and will assist in coordinating review activities within the state as well as provide reports and access records on priority of service. On-site visits will be conducted by the State Veterans Coordinator to monitor priority of service. Local office managers will monitor priority of service on a daily basis to ensure it is implemented within their respective workforce centers. The State Veterans Coordinator will review the Managers Reports on a quarterly basis for each workforce center to ensure priority of service is implemented and to identify if any issues exist.

Additionally, staff who enter job orders notify veterans prior to notifying non-veterans of job opportunities. Staff are to case note their use of Priority of Service. Program staff will review Job Orders to ensure POS is being documented and offered in case notes. Every effort is made to ensure veterans are receiving first notice on services provided at American Job Centers.

Veterans and eligible persons will receive Priority of Service by workforce center staff, for basic employment needs. Veterans Priority of Service is to ensure equally qualified Veterans receive services and training before other equally qualified non-Veterans. When a veteran self-identifies with staff or online through our labor exchange portal, they are prompted with a set of questions to log their service and to discover if significant barriers to employment exist. Staff have been provided a checklist to go through with the veteran which helps to identify significant barriers to employment. Online a veteran will select that they have military experience and will be prompted with questions regarding their service and if significant barriers to employment exist. Should these barriers exist, an email is generated and sent to the workforce center where the client registered stating a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist needs to contact this veteran as soon as possible. The Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist is then notified and reaches out to the veteran. When staff determines a veteran to have a barrier to employment by following the SBE checklist, Veterans are referred to the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist. The Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialist assesses barriers to include economic, educational, whether or not they are homeless, and others that prevent the Veterans from being job ready. The Local Veterans Employment Representative will focus on providing employment and outreach to businesses, on behalf of Veterans.

8. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Within the American Job Centers, on-site Wagner-Peyser services are readily available to individuals with disabilities. Normally, when employment and training workforce specialists work with clients who need greater assistance than what can be prudently provided by the workforce specialists, they make referrals to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. It is common for employment and training personnel to meet regularly, discuss programmatic needs, and network on work opportunities and job readiness. Good relationships exist between the Employment and Training and the Vocational Rehabilitation program staffs, based on efforts at the State and particularly the local level. Both organizations are continuously working to improve information sharing.

The Department of Workforce Services also coordinates with outside partners to serve the needs of individuals with disabilities. Community organizations such as the Wyoming Children's Society and Councils for People with Disabilities will continue to be used as partners. Emphasizing growing partnerships with Adult Education and Literacy will continue, with a focus in serving those individuals which may be functioning at a lower educational level, while providing concurrent services intended to increase their work readiness skills.

The Department also serves young people with disabilities in the secondary school system. It also will work with community organizations to serve youth with disabilities. The Department evaluates youth with disabilities, and their successes, on an individual basis. For youth with disabilities, a measure of success has been achieved when they can work and live in the community.

Individuals with disabilities are not discouraged from participating in the other programs described in this plan. As a targeted population, such people will be served whenever and wherever opportunities are available.

Further, Wyoming DVR has been very proactive in overcoming barriers for applicants and clients to access and participate in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs. Following is a list of key activities implemented to assure equitable access:

- Most DWS Field Offices are in accessible locations. If one is not accessible, we will conduct meetings in an alternate location that meets the client's accessibility needs.
- All DVR public meetings are held in locations that are physically accessible to people with disabilities.
- All applicants and clients are informed that alternative formats for information (Braille, diskette, large print, and auxiliary aids and reasonable accommodations) are available upon request for all DVR meetings.
- DVR makes special efforts to provide interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, individuals who speak foreign languages.
- DVR participates in a "Safety Committee". The purpose of this committee is to evaluate the accessibility and safety issues of all area offices.
- DVR's Internet Home Page is accessible for individuals with disabilities who may be using assistive devices to access the information.
- DVR has implemented a policy to coordinate referrals for the provision of statewide assistive technology devices and services to ensure clients can overcome barriers they encounter during the rehabilitation process.
- DVR administers a telephone relay service (TRS) program for free distribution of accessible telephone equipment to Wyoming residents with disabilities as well as those who are Deaf, hearing or visually impaired.

Fourteen (14) of the sixteen (16) VR Field offices are co-located with our Employment and Training colleagues. Fifteen (15) of the field offices should already comply with section 188 of WIOA as well as applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et. seq.) We also work with the individual landlords in building the State does not own to ensure that concerns about accessibility are addressed. All Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are either licensed CRC's or are in the process of completing an accredited Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling program. Additionally, all VR staff undergoes annual training to enhance their skills to address the needs of individuals with disabilities - including accessibility.

Wyoming offers physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities at each of our facilities across the state. All 16 field offices and satellite offices meet the applicable provisions of the ADA and section 188 of WIOA.

VR Staff are supported and trained on an annual basis through an all-staff in-service, quarterly in-services and day to day managing of caseloads of individuals who have been determined eligible to receive Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Additionally, we provide training opportunities for staff throughout the year so that they can maintain their Certification for Rehabilitation Counseling up to date.

Future training programs will be developed in consultation with the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) to provide training and Technical Assistance on the new statutory requirements imposed by the WIOA. The WINTAC will develop and provide training and TA to our VR agency staff and related rehabilitation professionals and service providers to help them develop the skills and processes needed to meet the requirements of WIOA.

Policy and one-stop accessibility criteria are essential to our agency and have been updated to comply with the law. Ongoing efforts of ensuring better access to our field offices for all job seekers include:

- Front desks are partially lowered, so job seekers with a lower line of sight are welcomed eye-to-eye;
- Signs with pictures/symbols are displayed to direct job seekers to computers, telephones, faxes, etc.
- Up-to-date adaptive technology is included with a list of other services/resources (i.e., materials in foreign languages) available for all job seekers.
- Accessible workshops, on-site recruitments, and job fairs are marketed to job seekers with disabilities.
- Workforce Center staff members and partners participate in awareness training to learn how to more effectively serve a diverse population of job seekers, including jobs seekers with disabilities.
- Workforce Center staff members and partners are familiar with a wide range of community resources and collaborate with service providers to reach common employment goals of job seekers.
- Workforce Center staff members and partners often work together with VR to serve job seekers with disabilities, using an integrated service approach with cost and resource sharing.

9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-stop Delivery System for English Language Learners

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

Within the American Job Centers, staff will ensure that all English Language Learners receive, free of charge, the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to the programs, services, and information offered to all customers. This will be done through the skills of bilingual staff as well as the availability of interpretive language phone lines which are available free of charge to any individual who needs or requests such services.

On-site Wagner-Peyser services are readily available to individuals with limited English proficiency. It is common for employment and training personnel to meet regularly, discuss programmatic needs, and network on work opportunities and job readiness. Good relationships exist between the Employment and Training and the other program staffs, based on efforts at the State and particularly the local level. Many organizations are continuously working to improve information sharing.

The Department of Workforce Services also coordinates with outside partners to serve the needs of individuals with limited English. Emphasizing growing partnerships with Adult Education and Family Literacy will continue, with a focus in serving those individuals which may be functioning at a lower educational level, while providing concurrent services intended to increase their work readiness skills.

The Department also serves young people with limited English proficiency in the secondary school system. It also will work with community organizations to serve these youth. The Department evaluates youth, and their successes, on an individual basis. For youth with limited English proficiency, a measure of success has been achieved when they can work and live in the community.

Individuals with limited English proficiency are not discouraged from participating in the other programs described in this plan. As a targeted population, such people will be served whenever and wherever opportunities are available.

IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

Wyoming programs work together both on an ad-hoc basis and through various scheduled meetings. Currently, the core programs meet weekly. Communication flows between all WIOA related programs through various means including telephone, email and during meetings allowing for joint planning and coordination. Additionally, the programs have specified methods of referral between programs ensuring services are coordinated.

V. Common Assurances (For All Core Programs)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that—

1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;

3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;
10. The State has a One-Stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all One-Stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.

VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs

The State must address all Program-Specific Requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

Program-specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B--

a. General Requirements

1. Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas

A. Identify the Regions and the Local Workforce Development Areas Designated in the State.

Wyoming has been designated as a single-area state by Wyoming Governor Mead.

B. Describe the Process Used for Designating Local Areas, Including Procedures for Determining Whether the Local Area Met the Criteria for “performed Successfully” and “sustained Fiscal Integrity” in Accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the Process Used for Identifying Regions and Planning Regions Under Section 106(a) of WIOA. This Must Include a Description of How the State Consulted with the Local Boards and Chief Elected Officials in Identifying the Regions.

This is not applicable to single-area states.

C. Provide the Appeals Process Referred to in Section 106(b)(5) of WIOA Relating to Designation of Local Areas.

This is not applicable to single-area states.

D. Provide the Appeals Process Referred to in Section 121(h)(2)(e) of WIOA Relating to Determinations for Infrastructure Funding.

This is not applicable to single-area states.

2. Statewide Activities

A. Provide State Policies or Guidance for the Statewide Workforce Development System and for Use of State Funds for Workforce Investment Activities.

Wyoming will utilize the Governor’s Vision and Goals as guidance for the statewide workforce development System:

Wyoming’s workforce development system will be fundamental in supporting robust regional and state economies and in producing a high-quality workforce valued by Wyoming employers.

GOAL 1: Ensure Wyoming employers have access to a skilled, high-quality workforce in today’s changing economy

1.1: Engage the business community and align education and workforce training opportunities with the needs of Wyoming employers.

1.2 Ensure training is predicated upon a labor market need by using employer feedback, labor market information, and sector strategy input.

1.3 Expand efforts to recruit and retain workers.

Strategies:

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council Executive Committee shall focus on the state's most significant short- and long-term workforce development priorities that should inform the full Board's priorities (1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

Create, foster, and expand sector strategies based upon input provided by employers and data provided by Wyoming Research and Planning (1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

A sector strategy subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall oversee sector strategy activities and identify new industries that need sector strategies (1.1,1.2).

Organize and host the annual Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit to further develop relationships with employers and furnish them with information related to the services of the workforce development system (1.1).

Quarterly supply-and-demand labor market information reports shall be provided to the Workforce Development Council (1.2).

Cultivate partnerships between sector strategies and apprenticeship programs (1.1).

Continue to strengthen the Wyoming Grown program with targeted marketing efforts to recruit Wyoming natives back to the state (1.3).

Work with economic development entities to develop practices aimed at retaining workers (1.1, 1.3).

GOAL 2: Ensure all Wyoming people who want to work have access to an open, streamlined, and effective workforce development system

2.1 Maximize core program coordination.

2.2 Utilize Career Pathways as an umbrella model in One-Stop centers.

2.3 Evaluate efforts to ensure that training and education requirements match the state's labor market needs.

2.4 Work to reduce barriers to employment for underrepresented populations.

Strategies:

Develop a marketing plan to create awareness about services offered by One-Stop centers (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

To ensure accountability and transparency of funding, core programs shall provide a joint annual report to the Workforce Development Council which demonstrates administrative-to-program costs and program performance to help the Council identify opportunities for fund allocation (2.1).

A Career Pathways subcommittee of the Workforce Development Council shall be formed to oversee the development of Career Pathways activities (2.1, 2.2).

Labor market analysis and the needs communicated by employers should inform ongoing One-Stop system planning and development (2.2, 2.3).

Employer education efforts regarding the benefits of hiring underrepresented workforce populations should be expanded (2.4).

Continue to develop and enhance programs that incentivize employment of underrepresented workforce populations (2.4).

Utilize integrated training and education programs as a way to more efficiently move adults in need of literacy skills or high school equivalency certificates into the workplace (2.4).

GOAL 3: Prepare all Wyoming youth to be both career and college ready

3.1 Work with Governor's policy teams to enhance efforts to improve communication, coordination, and collaboration in preparing youth for post-secondary studies or the world of work.

3.2 Incorporate a Career Pathways system as a model to better guide young people.

3.3 Incorporate pre-apprenticeship programs to offer young people opportunities to gain technical skills that are best learned on the job.

3.4 Disseminate information regarding future in-demand labor market needs.

Strategies:

Promote career exploration through Career Pathways so young people can acquire educational, technical, and social skills that enhance career development (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4).

Work with education partners and stakeholders to develop assessment tools and information regarding Career Pathways to youth (3.1, 3.2).

Provide opportunities for employers and industry representatives to connect with young people (3.1, 3.3).

Develop pre-apprenticeship strategies with the Wyoming Office of Registered Apprenticeship to foster a future pipeline of skilled workers (3.3).

Create a communication outreach method that targets youth, parents, educators, and other stakeholders (3.1).

Using labor market information and input from the business community, communicate future labor market needs to community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and other training entities and stakeholders (3.4)

The state of Wyoming provides the Wyoming Workforce Development Training Fund (WDTF) as a state-funded workforce development tool. Under the WDTF there are three sets of rules through which entities, as defined in rule, may apply for funding. The Business Training Grants program can provide funding to a business/employer for individual employees to receive occupation/position specific training. Pre-Hire Economic Development Grants are available to training entities in the state that are working with a business or industry to increase the number of positions within that industry. Finally, the Pre-Obligation program is available for Economic Development Entities to use when working to recruit a new business to Wyoming.

All state funding shall be used in line with and per the guidance provided by the Wyoming Workforce Development Council.

B. Describe How the State Intends to Use Governor's Set Aside Funding. Describe How the State Will Utilize Rapid Response Funds to Respond to Layoffs and Plant Closings and Coordinate Services to Quickly Aid Companies and Their Affected Workers. States Also Should Describe Any Layoff Aversion Strategies They Have Implemented to Address at Risk Companies and Workers

Rapid Response

Rapid Response activities are designed to help dislocated workers transition into new jobs as quickly as possible after a permanent facility closure or mass layoff, or after a natural or other disaster resulting in mass job dislocation. In Wyoming, Rapid Response teams are organized by the local American Job Centers for each community and situation. The teams consist of agency and community members as applicable. Program management is monitored through the U.S. Department of Labor–Employment and Training Administration self-assessment survey.

Should aversion efforts be unsuccessful, the Rapid Response Program serves employers and employees where announced business closures and layoffs occur. Rapid Response is conducted by the local American Job Centers, in coordination with the Unemployment Insurance Division and community services, to assist affected employees as requested by employers.

A working group within the program team explores ways to track, serve, and identify training needs for workers affected by closures and layoffs. Staff members have been trained how to register individuals in the State management information system, enter the Rapid Response code, and enter a case note if they attended a Rapid Response workshop, or were a dislocated worker as a result of a layoff or closure. Case managers who meet with affected employees after the workshops use this process.

Currently, the Department of Workforce Services has a Rapid Response information page on its main website for employers. The Department utilizes a PowerPoint presentation as a training tool, a program description page, and various materials for use by local offices when responding to employers.

Local office supervisors have access to a Rapid Response PowerPoint presentation that trains staffs how to respond to layoffs or closures.

Standard marketing materials have been developed and distributed to the field offices. These are supplemented with information from the Department's intranet site for Rapid Response. A survey to better determine the needs of laid off individuals is included in the packet. Many local offices also include a community services list.

Local Employment and Training Division offices take the lead in coordinating with agencies, workers, and employers to provide rapid responses. Employers can provide facilities, contacts, and advertising resources to make job searches for displaced workers an office-based work activity. The ability of employees to undertake job searches while they are still employed and with the support of their current employer greatly increases their prospects for reemployment. Strong and active participation of employee representatives, such as unions, contributes to a greater level of acceptance and trust by affected workers. The local office contacts the State Rapid Response coordinator about an upcoming layoff and establishes an on-site contact with employer and employee representatives quickly -- usually within 48 hours or less after becoming aware of a current or projected permanent closure or substantial layoff.

Employers will be contacted immediately to schedule an initial meeting with the employer, representatives of the affected workers, and the local community to determine employer needs and desires. At the first meeting, a Rapid Response packet is provided. The packet is refined to an employer's needs and referral services as needed. The Unemployment Division also is contacted for inclusion on the Rapid Response team.

The Rapid Response team provides information on available benefits and services, and functions as triage to connect dislocated workers to appropriate services. The local workforce services office will provide information about programs and services and will facilitate access. Such services may include, but are not limited to, information about the following:

1. Unemployment insurance (when and how to apply)
2. Job training (eligibility and training opportunities)
3. Employment services
 - a. Job searches
 - b. Workshops (resumes, job searching, and interviewing)
 - c. Labor market information
4. Identifying skills (transferable)
5. Technical training institutions
6. Consumer credit
7. Financial institutions

8. Small Business Administration
9. Economic development
10. Adult Education
11. Trade Adjustment Assistance
12. Registered Apprenticeship

The Rapid Response team will provide a presentation and services packets to employees on-site at the discretion of employer or at the local American Job Center.

Layoff aversion services are also available and include:

- Ongoing engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with local businesses to build successful layoff aversion efforts and to help dislocated workers obtain reemployment as soon as possible.
- Assistance to employers in managing reductions in force, early identification of firms at risk of layoffs, needs assessments and options for at-risk firms, and the delivery of services to address these needs.
- Constant monitoring of media information to determine if a company's operations may be sustained through a buyout, resulting in avoiding or minimizing layoffs.
- Developing and managing incumbent worker training programs or other worker skills improvement efforts.
- Connecting companies to State programs designed to prevent layoffs or to reemploy quickly dislocated workers; business loan programs for employee skills upgrading; and other Federal, State and local resources as necessary.
- Establishing linkages with economic development activities at the Federal, State, and local levels, including state and local business retention and expansion activities.
- Partnering with business-focused organizations to assess risks to companies, propose strategies to address risks, implement services, and measure impacts of services delivered.
- Conducting analyses of suppliers for affected companies to assess their risks and vulnerabilities from a potential closing or shift in production.
- Engaging in proactive measures to identify opportunities for potential economic transition and training needs in growing industry sectors or expanding businesses.

- Connecting businesses and workers to short-term, on-the-job, or customized training programs and apprenticeships before or after a layoff to help facilitate rapid reemployment.

C. In Addition, Describe the State Policies and Procedures to Provide Rapid Responses in Cases of Natural Disasters Including Coordination with Fema and Other Entities.

Rapid Response services also are offered to employers during natural disasters. Initial coordination is accomplished with the State-level Office of Homeland Security to consolidate services. Local Rapid Response teams are available to assist dislocated workers.

Assessments for possible disaster dislocated worker grants are accomplished after coordination with the State-level Office of Homeland Security to ensure non-duplication of efforts.

D. Describe How the State Provides Early Intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to Worker Groups on Whose Behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (taa) Petition Has Been Filed. (section 134(a)(2)(a).) This Description Must Include How the State Disseminates Benefit Information to Provide Trade-affected Workers in the Groups Identified in the Taa Petitions with an Accurate Understanding of the Provision of Taa Benefits and Services in Such a Way That They Are Transparent to the Trade-affected Dislocated Worker Applying for Them (trade Act Sec. 221(a)(2)(a) and Sec. 225; Governor- Secretary Agreement). Describe How the State Will Use Funds That Have Been Reserved for Rapid Response to Provide Services for Every Worker Group That Files a Taa Petition.

Rapid Response activities are designed to help trade-affected workers find new jobs as quickly as possible after layoffs. Wyoming's Rapid Response teams provide all trade-affected workers with comprehensive information regarding the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program and benefits, including training opportunities and trade readjustment allowance benefits. This information is provided to workers at the business location, or to individuals at an American Job Center. The information may be provided in brochures, Powerpoint presentations, or during interviews.

b. Adult and Dislocated Workers Program Requirements

1. If the State is Utilizing Work-based Training Models (e.g. On-the- Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training) as Part of Its Training Strategy and These Strategies Are Not Already Discussed in Other Sections of the Plan, Describe the State's Strategies for How These Models Ensure High Quality Training for Both the Participant and the Employer.

This has been discussed in other sections of the plan.

2. Describe How the State Will Incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into Its Strategy and Services.

This has been discussed in other sections of the plan.

3. Provide the Procedure, Eligibility Criteria, and Information Requirements for Determining Training Provider Initial and Continued Eligibility, Including Registered Apprenticeship Programs (wioa Section 122).

A training services provider who wants to be added to Wyoming's list of eligible training providers must submit an application for initial eligibility to the Department of Workforce Services. The Department reviews applications for completeness and compliance with section 122 of the WIOA. The Department then presents recommendations to the Wyoming Workforce Development Council for final approval or denial of the provider's application. If approved by the Council, the provider will remain eligible and listed for only one year for a particular program.

The following eligibility criteria and information requirements apply to all organizations, with the exception of Registered Apprenticeship programs:

1. A training provider must operate in a competitive environment. There must be an established catalog or market price for each offered program. Training programs must be provided within normal business operations. Training programs must have published or stated durations, hours, and schedules.
2. A training provider must be current on unemployment insurance payments and worker's compensation coverage.
3. If located outside Wyoming, the training provider must be on the active list of eligible providers for their home state.
4. A description of each training service to be offered, including costs associated with the training program, must be provided.
5. Program-specific performance information must be provided, as outlined by the initial eligibility application.
6. A description about whether the provider is in partnership with a business must be included.
7. Information about whether the training services lead to an industry-recognized credential must be provided.
8. Information addressing the alignment of training services with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, to the extent practicable, must be included.

After the first year if the provider or program meets subsequent approval requirements, the Wyoming Workforce Development Council may approve continued eligibility. A provider will then be reviewed every two years to remain listed as an eligible training provider.

To be approved for continued inclusion on the list, the program must meet the following criteria:

1. The training program(s) must be related to a demand occupation. The exception: In instances where the training programs do not relate to in-demand occupations, the training provider must demonstrate an employer need for trainees.
2. If the training provider does not meet the criteria for an institution of higher education as defined by the Higher Education Act, the training program(s) must be available and sold in substantial quantities to the general public.

3. The training provider must submit specified performance-based information about student outcomes in each training program offered by the training provider. These performance measures will be included in the list of eligible training provider programs made available to the public.

The training provider must provide the following performance information every two years, for each program and all individuals participating:

- The percentage of program participants who successfully complete a training program.
- The percentage of program participants who enter unsubsidized employment in an occupation related to the program.
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential.

For purposes of this agreement, all individuals participating in a training course will include both WIOA funded students and non-WIOA funded students who were enrolled in the approved training program.

Registered Apprenticeships

Under WIOA title I-B, Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsors who request to be on the eligible training provider list are automatically included and will remain so as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements, or to an eligibility period or initial procedures as other training providers. A Registered Apprenticeship Program shall be added to Wyoming's list of eligible providers simply by contacting the Department of Workforce Services and providing the following information:

1. Occupations included in the Registered Apprenticeship program.
2. Name and address of the program sponsor.
3. Name and address of the applicable technical instruction provider.

4. The method and length of instruction.
5. The number of active apprentices.

The status of all Registered Apprenticeship programs will be verified every two years, and any Registered Apprenticeship programs that have been either voluntarily or involuntarily deregistered will be removed from the Wyoming list of eligible providers.

4. Describe How the State Will Implement and Monitor the Priority for Public Assistance Recipients, Other Low-income Individuals, and Individuals Who Are Basic Skills Deficient in Accordance with the Requirements of WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(e), Which Applies to Individualized Career Services and Training Services Funding by the Adult Formula Program.

With respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities under paragraph (2)(A) or (3) of section 133(b), priority shall be given to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient for receipt of career services described in paragraph(2)(A)(xii) and training services. The appropriate local board and the Governor shall direct the one-stop operators in the local area with regard to making determinations related to such priority.

Priority of Service will be provided to specific groups of high-need adults for career and training services under the title I Adult program. Adults who are recipients of public assistance, are determined low-income, or are basic skills deficient will be given priority over other individuals for receipt of individualized career services and training services. Veterans within these groups receive priority over non-veterans. Adult priority will be determined for these targeted groups during eligibility and enrollment through interviews with the adult applicants, the use of various assessment tools, and verification of public assistance benefits, when applicable.

For the purposes of Priority of Service, individuals who are receiving public assistance in Wyoming include those receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Individuals determined to be low-income include those who are receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance, are receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, are homeless, are unemployed, or are employed but their total family earnings fall below the Federal Poverty Level.

Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient include those who have English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level, or are unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Wyoming's current WIOA Policy ensures the process and requirement in serving individuals who are public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Career Services shall be available to individuals who are Adults and Dislocated Workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include:

- 1) Determination of whether the individual is eligible to receive services under WIOA;

- 2) Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;
- 3) Initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs;
- 4) Labor exchange services, including:
 - a) Job search and placement assistance and, in appropriate cases, career counseling, including:
 - i) Provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - ii) Provision of information on nontraditional employment; and
 - b) Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including small employers, in the local area, which services may include services such as providing information and referral to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system;
- 5) Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the one-stop delivery system and, in appropriate cases, other workforce development programs;
- 6) Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
 - a) Job vacancy listings in such labor market areas;
 - b) Information on job skills necessary to obtain such jobs;
 - c) Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations; and
- 7) Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services and eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, providers of adult education described in title II, providers of career and technical education activities at the postsecondary level, and career and technical education activities available to school drop-outs, under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and vocational rehabilitation services described in title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- 8) Provision of information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to one-stop center customers, regarding performance accountability measures with respect to the one-stop delivery system in the local area;
- 9) Supportive Services;

- a) Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, including child care, child support, medical or child health assistance under title XIX or XXI of the Social Security Act, benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, assistance through the earned income tax credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and assistance under the State program for temporary assistance for needy families funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act; and
- b) Referral to the services or assistance described above, as appropriate;
- 10) Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- 11) Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under this Act;
- 12) Services, if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment, that consist of:
 - a) Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - i) Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 - ii) In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
 - b) Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible providers of training services, and career pathways to attain career objectives;
 - c) Group counseling;
 - d) Individual counseling;
 - e) Career planning;
 - f) Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
 - g) Internships and work experiences that are linking to careers;
 - h) Workforce preparation activities;
 - i) Financial literacy services;
 - j) Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; or

k) English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs

5. Describe the State's Criteria Regarding Local Area Transfer of Funds Between the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs.

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS), the state entity responsible for administering the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), is choosing to eliminate any limitation on transferring WIOA funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs. DWS is planning to transfer up to 50 percent of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs, as needs for these programs, within the state, with the option to transfer additional percentage as determined. This option is identified in WIOA Section 133(b)(4) and TEGL 133(b)(4) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—A local board may transfer, if such a transfer is approved by the Governor, up to and including 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area under paragraph (2)(A) or (3), and up to and including 100 percent of the funds allocated to the local area under paragraph (2)(B), for a fiscal year between—(A) adult employment and training activities; and (B) dislocated worker employment and training activities.

Per TEGL 17-15, and staying within the WIOA mission, vision, to serve individuals most in need, Wyoming allows the transfer of up to 50 percent of funds between the adult and dislocated worker fund streams in order to allow local workforce centers the flexibility to provide services that meet the needs of their unique labor market.

Transferred funds must stay within the original year of allocation and time period and will be dependent upon the needs of each workforce center. Criteria that will be used to determine the appropriateness of transferring funds include changes in planned services to eligible participants, unexpected layoffs requiring additional funds, changes in the goals for serving eligible participants, changes in labor market conditions, and increased costs of funded training programs.

All transfers of funds must be approved by the Wyoming Workforce Development Council or Agency designee, and are subject to the WIOA adult program priority of service requirement and each program's performance requirements.

c. Youth Program Requirements

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA,—

1. Identify the State-developed Criteria to Be Used by Local Boards in Awarding Grants for Youth Workforce Investment Activities and Describe How the Local Boards Will Take into Consideration the Ability of the Providers to Meet Performance Accountability Measures Based on Primary Indicators of Performance for the Youth Program as Described in Section 116(b)(2)(a)(ii) of WIOA in Awarding Such Grants.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

This is not applicable to single-area states; Wyoming is a single-area state.

2. Describe the Strategies the State Will Use to Achieve Improved Outcomes for Out-of-school Youth as Described in 129(a)(1)(b), Including How it Will Leverage and Align the Core Programs, and Combined State Plan Partner Programs Included in This Plan, Required and Optional One-stop Partner Programs, and Any Other Resources Available.

Out-of-school youth

The biggest change under the WIOA Youth Program is the shift to focus resources primarily on out-of-school youth. Wyoming recognizes a transition to serve more such young people will take time to implement, and the State is committed to incorporating strategies for doing so. Strategies will incorporate strong framework services, such as intake, objective assessments, development of individual service strategies, case management, supportive services, and follow-up services. Another focus is providing a minimum of 20 percent of expenditures on work experience opportunities for out-of-school youth.

Each Workforce Services region has socioeconomic indicators which may require a more customized plan for delivering services such as: job training opportunities, leadership skill development, guidance and counseling, adult mentoring, job shadowing, supportive services, tutoring and study skills training, alternative secondary school services, paid and unpaid work experiences, Registered Apprenticeships, postsecondary transition, and employment opportunities. A major goal is to establish partnerships that support the Youth Program and to strengthen these relationships so they effectively provide WIOA program services now and in the future.

Young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who are low income; have basic literacy skills not commensurate with respective grade level; who are high school dropouts; homeless, runaway, or foster-care children; pregnant or parenting; legal offenders; disabled; or lack vocational goals and reside in geographically remote areas will be the focus of the proposed plan.

The targeted groups are identified using a variety of methods, such as:

- Coordinated assessment efforts with community partners
- Partnering State agencies
- Alternative learning centers
- School counselors
- Probation and parole
- Youth group homes
- Residential treatment centers
- Mental health programs
- Other community organizations

Partners reflect the suggested partner structure outlined in WIOA. These partners are a crucial resource as service providers for at-risk youth, including young people who are at risk for dropping out of high school, and who have already dropped out or have completed their high school education.

Staff will either solely or working closely with a partnering organization use an application process to determine and document an applicant's eligibility for WIOA youth services. New components will consist of incorporating Career Pathways as part of both the initial objective assessment and the individual service strategy. Also, the service strategy will be directly linked to one or more performance indicators. The process includes an evaluation of the young person's residency, income eligibility, age, basic occupational skills and abilities, aptitudes, interests, barriers to employment, support service needs, academic requirements, financial resources, and vocational potential. Required documentation and verification of eligibility will be maintained in the Wyoming at Work management information system, and/or, in paper format. The program will also include effective connections to employers, including small employers, in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

3. Describe How the State Will Ensure That All 14 Program Elements Described in WIOA Section 129(c)(2) Are Made Available and Effectively Implemented.*

* Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I) Expenditure requirement

Per WIOA guidance, Wyoming will be shifting the primary focus of Title I youth formula programs to support the educational and career success of out-of-school youth. WIOA now requires that a minimum of 75 percent of WIOA youth funds be spent on out-of-school youth, which is an increase from the minimum of 30 percent under the Workforce Investment Act. This change represents a significant shift in the focus of WIOA youth programs by serving out-of-school youth who have substantial unmet needs and would benefit from services provided under this program.

Calculations

Expenditure rates will be determined after subtracting funds that are not spent on direct services to youth. The out-of-school youth expenditure rate is calculated after subtracting funds devoted to administrative costs.

Planning

Wyoming feels it is not currently positioned to spend at least 75 percent of WIOA funds on out-of-school youth for the program year 2015. Therefore, Wyoming has chosen, per TEGL 23-14 section 4, to set its initial expenditure for the initial year at 60 percent. Wyoming will work to increase expenditure at a minimum increase of 10 percent compared to the previous year, which was no lower than a 50 percent out-of-school youth expenditure rate.

Tracking

All expenditures for services are initiated in local offices using a virtual operating system, Wyoming at Work. Payments are processed using Wyoming at Work, which was developed by Geographic Solutions, specifically for the State of Wyoming's WIA, WIOA, WP, and TAA

programs. Wyoming at Work was developed to promote the program's one-stop concept of customer service, and supports Wagner-Peyser, WIA/WIOA, Trade Adjustment Assistance, eligible training providers, and fiscal expenditures.

Wyoming at Work contains all necessary information about individual participants, job seekers, employers, and training providers so that appropriate career, training, and employment services can be provided to customers. Wyoming at Work is used in both the local and State offices in administering the WIOA program.

Recruiting out-of-school youth

The biggest change under the WIOA Youth Program is the shift to focus resources primarily on out-of-school youth. Wyoming recognizes a transition to serve more such young people will take time to implement, and the State is committed to incorporating strategies for doing so. Strategies will incorporate strong framework services, such as intake, objective assessments, development of individual service strategies, case management, supportive services, and follow-up services. Another focus is providing a minimum of 20 percent of expenditures on work experience opportunities for out-of-school youth.

Each Workforce Services region has socioeconomic indicators which may require a more customized plan for delivering services such as: job training opportunities, leadership skill development, guidance and counseling, adult mentoring, job shadowing, supportive services, tutoring and study skills training, alternative secondary school services, paid and unpaid work experiences, Registered Apprenticeships, postsecondary transition, and employment opportunities. A major goal is to establish partnerships that support the Youth Program and to strengthen these relationships so they effectively provide WIOA program services now and in the future.

Young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who are low income; have basic literacy skills not commensurate with respective grade level; who are high school dropouts; homeless, runaway, or foster-care children; pregnant or parenting; legal offenders; disabled; or lack vocational goals and reside in geographically remote areas will be the focus of the proposed plan.

The targeted groups are identified using a variety of methods, such as:

- Coordinated assessment efforts with community partners
- Partnering State agencies
- Alternative learning centers
- School counselors
- Probation and parole
- Youth group homes
- Residential treatment centers

- Mental health programs
- Other community organizations

Partners reflect the suggested partner structure outlined in WIOA. These partners are a crucial resource as service providers for at-risk youth, including young people who are at risk for dropping out of high school, and who have already dropped out or have completed their high school education.

Staff will either solely or working closely with a partnering organization use an application process to determine and document an applicant's eligibility for WIOA youth services. New components will consist of incorporating Career Pathways as part of both the initial objective assessment and the individual service strategy. Also, the service strategy will be directly linked to one or more performance indicators. The process includes an evaluation of the young person's residency, income eligibility, age, basic occupational skills and abilities, aptitudes, interests, barriers to employment, support service needs, academic requirements, financial resources, and vocational potential. Required documentation and verification of eligibility will be maintained in the Wyoming at Work management information system, and/or, in paper format. The program will also include effective connections to employers, including small employers, in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

In-school youth transitions

Wyoming is continuing to serve Workforce Investment Act in-school-youth as they transition into WIOA. We do not want to exit prematurely in-school-youth from the program due to the shift in emphasis to the out-of-school youth program. Wyoming will continue to use most of the remaining PY 2014 funds for in-school youth services to assist them in successfully completing the program. Current funding will focus on out-of-school youth. As fewer resources under WIOA will be devoted to in-school youth, Wyoming and local areas are identifying existing resources that can provide services to in-school youth.

Program elements

WIOA has 14 program elements, including the original 10 program elements under WIA (which have been consolidated to nine as the summer employment opportunities program element is now a sub-element under paid and unpaid work experiences), and five new program elements.

The five new program elements are financial literacy education, entrepreneurial skills training, services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations in a local area, activities that help young people prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training, and education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Wyoming will continue to make all program elements available to youth participants. This will be done by focusing on improving educational achievement; preparing for and achieving in employment; providing guidance, mentoring, and service activities; and by offering services to develop the leadership potential of young people.

Expanded work experience focus

Wyoming realizes that work experience is a crucial part of the WIOA Youth Program, and a minimum of 20 percent of non-administrative funds must be spent on work experience. Work experience helps young people understand proper workplace behavior and what is required to attain and retain employment. Work experience can serve as a steppingstone to unsubsidized employment and is an important step in developing a career pathway for youth. Wyoming understands that WIOA eliminates the language under corresponding WIA rule that on-the-job training is not an appropriate work experience activity for youth. The 20 percent minimum will be calculated based on non-administrative youth funds and will include both in-school and out-of-school youth. Wyoming will track funds spent on work experience beginning with PY 2015.

Eligibility criteria

Wyoming has implemented the new WIOA eligibility criteria for the WIOA Youth Program. To be eligible for the WIOA youth program, an individual must be an out-of-school or an in-school youth.

In-school youth is an individual who:

- 1) Must be attending school.
- 2) Is not younger than 14 nor older than 21.
- 3) Meets the low-income requirement.
- 4) Has one or more of the following barriers:
 - a) Basic skills deficient;
 - b) An English Language Learner;
 - c) An ex-offender;
 - d) A homeless youth or runaway, in foster care, or has “aged out” of the foster care system;
 - e) Pregnant or parenting;
 - f) A youth who is an individual with a disability; or
 - g) An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment, which includes:
- 5) Chronic school absenteeism and truancy,

- 6) Youth in a single parent family,
- 7) Remoteness,
- 8) Limited English proficiency,
- 9) Lacks employability skills (only youth 19-24 years old),
- 10) Chronic mental, behavioral, and/or medical health condition.

An Out-of-School Youth is an individual who is:

- 1) Not attending any school (as defined under State law).
- 2) Not younger than 16 or older than age 24 at time of enrollment.
- 3) One or more of the following:
 - a) A school dropout.
 - b) A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter.
 - c) A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner.
 - d) An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system.
 - e) A homeless individual, a runaway, and individual who is in foster care or has aged out of the foster-care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act, or an individual who is in out-of-home placement.
 - f) An individual who is pregnant or parenting.
 - g) An individual with a disability.
 - h) A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment: which includes:
 - i) Chronic school absenteeism and truancy.
 - ii) Youth in a single parent family.
 - iii) Remoteness.

- iv) Limited English proficiency.
- v) Lacks employability skills (only youth 19-24 years old).
- vi) Chronic mental, behavioral, and/or medical health condition.

All 14 program elements are reviewed with each youth participant in the initial assessment interview. Those elements that are relevant to a particular youth participant are then included in the Individual Service Strategy and provided throughout WIOA participation. Program elements including Financial Literacy, Leadership Development, Adult Mentoring, Labor Market Information, and information on postsecondary education, training, and entrepreneurial opportunities are provided during individual one-on-one interactions, and group workshops and information sessions. These services are provided by both the local One-stop center staff and community partners such as local financial institutions, non-profit organizations, business entities, and educational leaders.

Through a strong partnership with Wyoming's Adult Education centers, youth participants are provided leadership and guidance to assist with tutoring, study skills training, dropout recovery services, and High School Equivalency completion as an important part of their career pathway to successful employment and post-secondary education.

Follow-up services are a required element for all youth participants and must be provided, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis following case closure. Follow-up services include continued leadership development and adult mentoring, additional career guidance and employment support, and ongoing assistance with education planning and career pathway development. Assistance with supportive services are made available to all youth participants both during WIOA participation and in follow-up through linkages with community organizations and financial support.

4. Provide the Language Contained in the State Policy for "requiring Additional Assistance to Enter or Complete an Educational Program, or to Secure and Hold Employment" Criterion for Out-of-school Youth Specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(b)(iii)(viii) and for "requiring Additional Assistance to Complete an Education Program, or to Secure and Hold Employment" Criterion for In-School Youth Specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(c)(iv)(vii).

Wyoming defines the "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" criterion as meeting one or more State-defined youth barriers. State-defined youth barriers will be used in conjunction with the federally defined barriers, as appropriate for each youth participant.

The State-defined youth barriers are as follows:

- Chronic school absenteeism and truancy: A youth whose absenteeism or truancy puts them at risk of failing to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalency.
- Youth in a single-parent family: A young person who is a member of a family headed by a single parent or guardian, including parents who have been divorced within the preceding six months, who are in current divorce proceedings, or who are currently legally separated and maintaining separate households.

- Remoteness: Any resident of a city or town with a population of 5,000 or less which is not within 10 miles of another city or town with a population greater than 5,000.
- Limited English language proficiency: A youth whose native language is not English and who is unable to communicate effectively in English, resulting in a substantial barrier to employment.
- Lacks employability skills for older youth, age 19 to 24 only: An individual who lacks the skills necessary to gain initial employment, maintain employment, and obtain new employment if required. Employability depends on knowledge, skills, and abilities they possess, and the manner in which those assets are used.
- Chronic mental, behavioral, and/or medical health conditions: A young person with a professionally diagnosed mental, behavioral, or medical health condition lasting three months or more, which generally cannot be prevented by vaccines, nor cured by medication, nor resolved without intervention (for example, parental/youth substance abuse, physical/sexual/psychological abuse, lack of social competence, or suicide proneness).

5. Include the State Definition, as Defined in Law, for Not Attending School and Attending School as Specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(b)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(c)(i). if State Law Does Not Define “not Attending School” or “attending School” Indicate That is the Case.

State law does not specifically define the terms “not attending school” or “attending school.” Per Wyo. Stat. § 21-4-102(2015), the following defines compulsory attendance:

§ 21-4-102. When attendance required; exemptions; withdrawal.

(a) Every parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any child who is a resident of this state and whose seventh birthday falls on or before September 15 of any year and who has not yet attained his sixteenth birthday or completed the tenth grade shall be required to send such child to, and such child shall be required to attend, a public or private school each year, during the entire time that the public schools shall be in session in the district in which the pupil resides; provided, that the board of trustees of each school district may exempt any child from the operation of this article when:

(i) The board believes that compulsory attendance in school would be detrimental to the mental or physical health of such child or the other children in the school; provided, the board may designate at the expense of the district a medical doctor of its choice to guide it and support it in its decision;

(ii) The board feels that compulsory school attendance might work undue hardship. The board may conduct a hearing on issues pursuant to this paragraph by executive session; or

(iii) The child has been legally excluded from the regular schools pursuant to the provisions of W.S. 21-4-306.

(b) A home-based educational program shall meet the requirements of a basic academic educational program pursuant to W.S. 21-4-101(a)(vi). It shall be the responsibility of every person administering a home-based educational program to submit a curriculum to the local board of trustees each year showing that the program complies with the requirements of this subsection. Failure to submit a curriculum showing compliance is prima facie evidence that the home-based educational program does not meet the requirements of this article.

(c) In addition to subsection (a) of this section, the parent, guardian or other person having control or charge of any child under the age of eighteen (18), who has not otherwise notified the district of enrolling that child in a different school district or in a private school or home-based educational program, shall meet in person with a school district counselor or administrator to provide the school district with written consent to the withdrawal of that child from school attendance. The written consent to withdrawal shall include a separate provision authorizing the release of the student's identity and address to the Wyoming national guard youth challenge program, as established by W.S. 19-9-701, for the sole purpose of recruitment into the Wyoming national guard youth challenge program.

6. If Not Using the Basic Skills Deficient Definition Contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(b), Include the Specific State Definition.

Wyoming's definition of "basic skills deficient" is an individual who is a:

1. Youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
2. Youth or Adult that is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

d. Single-area State Requirements

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must also include:

1. Any Comments from the Public Comment Period That Represent Disagreement with the Plan. (wioa Section 108(d)(3).)
2. The Entity Responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds, as Determined by the Governor, if Different from That for the State. (wioa Section 108(b)(15).)
3. The Type and Availability of WIOA Title I Youth Activities, Including an Identification of Successful Providers of Such Activities. (wioa Section 108(b)(9).)

Wyoming's definition of "basic skills deficient" is an individual who is a:

1. Youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
2. Youth or Adult that is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

4. A Description of the Roles and Resource Contributions of the One-stop Partners.

5. The Competitive Process Used to Award the Subgrants and Contracts for Title I Activities.

6. How Training Services Outlined in Section 134 Will Be Provided Through Individual Training Accounts And/or Through Contracts, and How Such Training Approaches Will Be Coordinated. Describe How the State Will Meet Informed Customer Choice Requirements Regardless of Training Approach.

7. How the State Board, in Fulfilling Local Board Functions, Will Coordinate Title I Activities with Those Activities Under Title II. Describe How the State Board Will Carry Out the Review of Local Applications Submitted Under Title II Consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(a) and (b)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232.

8. Copies of Executed Cooperative Agreements Which Define How All Local Service Providers Will Carry Out the Requirements for Integration of and Access to the Entire Set of Services Available in the One-stop Delivery System, Including Cooperative Agreements with Entities Administering Rehabilitation Act Programs and Services.

e. Waiver Requests (optional)

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. Identifies the Statutory or Regulatory Requirements for Which a Waiver is Requested and the Goals That the State or Local Area, as Appropriate, Intends to Achieve as a Result of the Waiver and How Those Goals Relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;
2. Describes the Actions That the State or Local Area, as Appropriate, Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Statutory or Regulatory Barriers;
3. Describes the Goals of the Waiver and the Expected Programmatic Outcomes if the Request is Granted;
4. Describes How the Waiver Will Align with the Department's Policy Priorities, Such As:
 - A. Supporting Employer Engagement;
 - B. Connecting Education and Training Strategies;

- C. Supporting Work-based Learning;
 - D. Improving Job and Career Results, and
 - E. Other Guidance Issued by the Department.
5. Describes the Individuals Affected by the Waiver; Including How the Waiver Will Impact Services for Disadvantaged Populations or Individuals with Multiple Barriers to Employment; and
6. Describes the Process Used To:
- A. Monitor the Progress in Implementing the Waiver;
 - B. Provide Notice to Any Local Board Affected by the Waiver;
 - C. Provide Any Local Board Affected by the Waiver an Opportunity to Comment on the Request;
 - D. Ensure Meaningful Public Comment, Including Comment by Business and Organized Labor, on the Waiver.
 - E. Collect and Report Information About Waiver Outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report
7. The Secretary May Require That States Provide the Most Recent Data Available About the Outcomes of the Existing Waiver in Cases Where the State Seeks Renewal of a Previously Approved Waiver;

Wyoming is not requesting any waivers.

f. Title I-B Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;
2. The state has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;
3. The state established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.
4. The state established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2).

5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership.
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the state consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the state in determining the distributions.
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7).
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan.
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers state laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I.
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3);

g. Adult Program Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	PY 2016 Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated Level	PY 2017 Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				

Measurable Skill Gains

Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹
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¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

h. Dislocated Program Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	PY 2016 Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated Level	PY 2017 Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated Level
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Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)

Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)

Median Earnings
(Second Quarter After Exit)

Credential Attainment Rate

Measurable Skill Gains

Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹
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¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

i. Youth Program Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	PY 2016 Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated Level	PY 2017 Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated Level
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Employment (Second
Quarter After Exit)

Employment (Fourth
Quarter After Exit)

Median Earnings
(Second Quarter After
Exit)

Credential Attainment
Rate

Measurable Skill Gains

Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹
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¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services)

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

a. Employment Service Professional Staff Development.

1. Describe How the State Will Utilize Professional Development Activities for Employment Service Staff to Ensure Staff is Able to Provide High Quality Services to Both Jobseekers and Employers.

Program managers receive training specific to the programs they administer. The training is provided through seminars, phone conferences, and other means by U.S. Department of Labor personnel and other workforce experts. Managers, in turn, train American Job Center personnel and others regarding these same programs, to ensure continuity of operations and service. Furthermore, regular phone conferences occur for veterans’ representatives, business representatives, the Wyoming at Work team, and other programs.

WIOA case management training is offered quarterly, which includes Wyoming at Work system training. The location for this training rotates to make it easier for workforce specialists to attend. American Job Center managers are also encouraged to attend.

The Department of Workforce Services continues to conduct Bridges Out of Poverty training -- a one-time, day-long session offered during new staff orientation. The training is required for all new staff. It is also open to current staff and community partners, such as hospital personnel, local non-profit staff, other State agency personnel, and business people. Based on the work of Dr. Ruby Payne, Bridges Out of Poverty reaches out to the millions of service providers and businesses whose daily work connects them with people in poverty.

Bridges Out of Poverty is not a program; rather, it is a set of concepts, strategies, and tools that help employers, community organizations, social service agencies, and individuals address poverty in a comprehensive way. These principles can be used to develop and maintain positive relationships with clients, as well as improve State and Federal outcomes. Bridges Out of Poverty provides structures, ideas, and concrete tools communities can use to prevent, reduce, and alleviate poverty. People from all economic classes come together to improve job retention rates, build resources, improve outcomes, and support those who are moving out of poverty.

Professional development resources are available for American Job Center staff members through many avenues. The State of Wyoming "Performance Management Instrument" process includes individual performance goals for staff that are used for professional development opportunities. These are available in the form of self-paced training modules, workshops, conferences, as well as, classroom environment training to improve customer service techniques.

Wyoming at Work, the Employment and Training Division's management information system, provides a variety of self-paced training modules. The State Department of Administration and Information conducts training class in customer support, management, and other service-related areas. On-the-job training is also provided through activities such as: job shadowing; self-directed study; standard operating procedure manuals; job aids; policy and procedure manuals, and workflow checklists. All are methods of ensuring that staff are trained to provide the highest quality services to their customers.

2. Describe Strategies Developed to Support Training and Awareness Across Core Programs and the Unemployment Insurance Program, and the Training Provided for Employment Services and WIOA Staff on Identification of Ui Eligibility Issues and Referral to Ui Staff for Adjudication.

All outreach workers in the Department of Workforce Services are merit system employees from the local America Job Centers in Wyoming. Wagner-Peyser funds are used to provide clients with American Job Centers across Wyoming, the provision of our labor exchange services, and the equipment/materials needed for facilitating both UI claimants and job seekers alike. This also includes mailing, faxing, and emailing of information to and from UI for our clients. As required by the Wagner-Peyser Act, our Wagner-Peyser and UI programs are brought together through the provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants. This includes access to our labor exchange software, Wyoming at Work. Each claimant must apply to 2 or more jobs per week and our job centers not only have trained staff available for assistance but also offer resource computers which claimants can use to search and apply for work, use of our phones/fax for work related purposes, printers/copiers for resumes and applications, and work areas as well. Our American Job Center employees have regular contact with the UI system, including the benefit program and employer taxation. As our staff work directly with clients and facilitate their interaction with UI; sending client correspondence, ensuring forms are filled out correctly, calling to verify needs from UI and adjudicators in regards to client cases, interpreting and conveying requirements and actions that UI documents entail, identifying UI eligibility issues and discussing these with the client and pairing with UI/adjudication if further details are needed that UI

has access to. Staff in all offices have received training regarding the UI process and also identification of eligibility issues in multiple formats; client guidebook, email, video, peer tutoring, telephone, new hire training, and in person (when available).

A video has been created by the Unemployment Insurance claims center. It is an Unemployment Insurance 101 education program that was recorded and has been distributed to all of the American Job Centers. New performance goals will focus on holistic service models that require the Unemployment Insurance claims center to create improved and innovative communication with all divisions, particularly Employment and Training. Furthermore, because of the one-stop system, they work consistently with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, which provides disability services; Workers Compensation Division; Labor Standards Division, which handles complaints; the Wyoming Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Division; the Department of Family Services, which provides individual and family services to income eligible clients; and other organizations. Continuous orientation and information sharing occurs between these organizations.

b. Explain How the State Will Provide Information and Meaningful Assistance to Individuals Requesting Assistance in Filing a Claim for Unemployment Compensation Through One-stop Centers, as Required by WIOA as a Career Service.

All outreach workers in the Department of Workforce Services are merit system employees from the local America Job Centers in Wyoming. Wagner-Peyser funds are used to provide clients with American Job Centers across Wyoming, the provision of our labor exchange services, and the equipment/materials needed for facilitating both UI claimants and job seekers alike. This also includes mailing, faxing, and emailing of information to and from UI for our clients. As required by the Wagner-Peyser Act, our Wagner-Peyser and UI programs are brought together through the provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants. This includes access to our labor exchange software, Wyoming at Work. Each claimant must apply to 2 or more jobs per week and our job centers not only have trained staff available for assistance but also offer resource computers which claimants can use to search and apply for work, use of our phones/fax for work related purposes, printers/copiers for resumes and applications, and work areas as well. Our American Job Center employees have regular contact with the UI system, including the benefit program and employer taxation. As our staff work directly with clients and facilitate their interaction with UI; sending client correspondence, ensuring forms are filled out correctly, calling to verify needs from UI and adjudicators in regards to client cases, interpreting and conveying requirements and actions that UI documents entail, identifying UI eligibility issues and discussing these with the client and pairing with UI/adjudication if further details are needed that UI has access to. Staff in all offices have received training regarding the UI process and also identification of eligibility issues in multiple formats; client guidebook, email, video, peer tutoring, telephone, new hire training, and in person (when available).

A video has been created by the Unemployment Insurance claims center. It is an Unemployment Insurance 101 education program that was recorded and has been distributed to all of the American Job Centers. New performance goals will focus on holistic service models that require the Unemployment Insurance claims center to create improved and innovative communication with all divisions, particularly Employment and Training. Furthermore, because of the one-stop system, they work consistently with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, which provides disability services; Workers Compensation Division; Labor Standards Division, which handles complaints; the Wyoming Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Division; the Department of Family Services, which provides individual and

family services to income eligible clients; and other organizations. Continuous orientation and information sharing occurs between these organizations.

c. Describe the State's Strategy for Providing Reemployment Assistance to Unemployment Insurance Claimants and Other Unemployed Individuals.

Basic career services will be offered to individuals through the Wagner-Peyser Program, which is available in person and electronically through the Wyoming at Work system. In-person services include assistance with job registration through the Wyoming at Work system, resume preparation, job matching, labor market information, skills testing, and career planning. Priority of service to veterans and eligible spouses is enforced through Federal and State policies and will be provided at all centers.

Staff-assisted services, including WIOA career and training services, are also offered at the American Job Centers. These services are coordinated with other programs, both within and outside of the American Job Centers. Through the centers, workers also will have access to the full array of other services provided by the Department of Workforce Services, including access to the unemployment insurance system.

Currently, UI claimants registered in the State job bank are provided applicable job postings as they become available. We are continuously looking for ways to improve the assessment and identification of barriers to employment for proper referral to other, and or additional resources, both internally and externally.

All American Job Centers throughout Wyoming offer core, career, and training services for the state's adult, dislocated worker, and youth workforces. This includes veterans, public assistance recipients, people with disabilities, older workers, migrant and seasonal farm workers, unemployed workers, and underemployed workers. Services are provided through the Wagner-Peyser Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, Dads Making A Difference, Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibilities (POWER), WY Quality Counts!, Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, Monitor Advocate, Foreign Labor Certification, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Federal Bonding, Senior Community Service Employment Program, and the Employment & Training Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs. Each program serves unique segments of the state's population, with the overarching goal of helping eligible individuals and families address employment and training needs, so they can achieve long-term self-sufficiency and increase earnings. Many of these programs are coordinated with other organizations, both within the American Job Centers and the communities served.

Two important Employment and Training Division components are the American Job Centers' staffs and Wyoming at Work, an online job-matching system that brings together job seekers and potential employers. The Wyoming at Work system facilitates common data collection for the Wagner-Peyser Act, Workforce Investment Act, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, and other employment and training programs. Reporting of Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act data and performance outcomes, including veterans data and outcomes, is accomplished through the Federal data reporting and validation system.

The Employment and Training Division utilizes updated versions of Wyoming at Work. The system is updated continually to keep abreast with new Federal requirements, as well as features requested by Wyoming staff and administration. The Employment and Training Division has developed a user group for the system, which is facilitated by a staff member from the administrative team. This group, made up of 16 employees from local American Job Centers, meets bi-weekly via telephone to discuss Wyoming at Work issues and share information on best practices. When necessary, the group includes representatives from Geographic Solutions, Inc. Geographic Solutions is the designer and operator of the Wyoming at Work system. This team is crucial to the success of Wyoming at Work.

Wagner-Peyser policy guides required services, service delivery, and strategies for services to individual job seekers and businesses. Through the Wagner-Peyser Program, American Job Center staffs use all available resources to streamline employer services and to refer eligible participants to job openings. Business service representatives in each American Job Center focus on employer needs. Business service representatives conduct initial and follow-up outreach to local companies. Monthly calls are conducted that include topics such as: technical assistance, coordinating activities, and sharing best practices. Wyoming at Work is the management information system that consolidates services to employers and job seekers.

d. Describe How the State Will Use W-p Funds to Support Ui Claimants, and the Communication Between W-p and Ui, as Appropriate, Including the Following:

1. Coordination of and Provision of Labor Exchange Services for Ui Claimants as Required by the Wagner-peyser Act;

Currently, Unemployment Insurance claimants who are registered in the State job bank (Wyoming at Work) receive notification of appropriate job postings as they become available. We are seeking ways to improve the assessment and identification of barriers to employment at all levels within the Department to ensure proper referrals are made internally.

All American Job Centers throughout Wyoming offer core, career, and training services for Wyoming's adult, dislocated worker, and youth individuals. This includes veterans, public assistance recipients, people with disabilities, older workers, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, unemployment insurance claimants, unemployed workers, and underemployed workers. This is accomplished through the Wagner-Peyser Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Employment & Training for Self Sufficiency, Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, Dads Making A Difference, Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibilities (POWER), WY Quality Counts!, Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, Monitor Advocate, Foreign Labor Certification, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Federal Bonding, Senior Community Service Employment Program, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance programs.

Each of the Employment and Training Division's programs serves unique segments of the state's population, with the overarching goal of helping eligible individuals and families address employment and training needs, so they can achieve long-term self-sufficiency and increase earnings. Many of these programs are coordinated with other organizations, both within the American Job Centers and the communities they serve.

2. Registration of Ui Claimants with the State's Employment Service if Required by State Law;

The registration process of UI claimants proceeds as follows; an individual is separated from work through no fault of their own (various criteria come into play regarding if a client is eligible for UI but the general standard of “through no fault of their own” applies to most). The individual then enters an American Job Center to gain direct access to the UI department which is a call center in Casper, Wyoming. The individual may also use the internet to file a claim or call on their personal phone to open a claim with the UI department making access to UI easier to clients. Once a claim is opened, the individual is alerted repeatedly by mail, electronically, by telephone, and in person to register in the state’s management information system, Wyoming at Work. Claimants must develop at least one active resume and activate the “virtual recruiter” setting in order to receive position-opening notifications. Staff at the American Job Center assist with all levels of registration as requested by individuals including; resume review and creation, how to use our labor exchange software to search for work, saved searches are entered (Virtual Recruiters), and a verification call is conducted by our job center staff the following day to ensure claimants are alerted to the requirement of registering for work. Currently, claimants who are registered in the State job bank are forwarded applicable job postings as they become available. American Job Centers, in conjunction with the Unemployment Insurance claims center, follow-up with Unemployment Insurance claimants in order to provide service delivery and labor exchange services.

In accordance with Chapter 27 and UIC Rules 20, 24, and 25 (if necessary), Unemployment Insurance claimants are given two weeks to register with the Wyoming at Work system, or to follow the registration rules in the state in which they reside. If Wyoming at Work registration is not completed correctly within two weeks benefits are denied until the issue is resolved.

3. Administration of the Work Test for the State Unemployment Compensation System, Including Making Eligibility Assessments (for Referral to Ui Adjudication, if Needed), and Providing Job Finding and Placement Services for Ui Claimants; and

Claimants are asked a series of qualifying questions regarding their availability for and ability to work. Responses are used for the claim, but they are also opportunities to gauge a claimant’s suitability for programs such as vocational rehabilitation and reemployment services. This is followed up by the local American Job Center by making outbound calls to claimants to assist with work search registration. A reminder call is completed two weeks after an initial claim is filed. Employees listen for verbal queues in which they can make referrals to additional services. At any point, employees can report activity that would require the attention of the adjudication unit.

4. Provision of Referrals to and Application Assistance for Training and Education Programs and Resources.

The Wyoming Workforce Development Council (WWDC) acts as the State Workforce Development Board for Wyoming. All Workforce programs are coordinated with the WWDC. The target populations of this partnership are adults, dislocated workers, and youth. The WWDC works closely with WIOA partners to ensure Wyoming has educated workers. WWDC members refer individuals and employers to American Job Centers regarding training, education, placement assistance.

Sector Strategies

The Governor, Wyoming Workforce Development Council, and Department of Workforce Services understand there are many state workforce concerns unique to certain industry sectors and clusters. As a result, they support sector strategy collaborations that bring together employers and employees to improve the competitiveness of a sector. Together, they address development, recruitment, and

retention challenges. In addition to advancing Sector Strategies, the Wyoming Workforce Development Council and Department of Workforce Services have released requests-for-proposals to support initiatives that advance alternative and renewable energy training, and that support economically disadvantaged individuals in reaching self-sufficiency. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Individuals in contact with industry partners will be referred to the American Job Center to receive training and education information, application assistance, and services.

Wyoming Department of Family Services

The Department of Family Services administers state programs serving families and individuals who are eligible for public assistance, including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Workforce Services partners with Family Services on programs such as WIOA, the TANF Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities (POWER) program, and the Healthy Families Succeed Program. Both departments provide funding for the services. Workforce Services also partners with Family Services through TANF and Employment and Training Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance programs to serve low-income customers. The target populations are adults and youth. Customers who receive DFS benefits will be referred to Department of Workforce Services to register for work and receive training, application assistance, and education opportunities.

Wyoming Department of Education

The Department of Education's target populations include students who are reading below grade level and at-risk sub-groups (i.e. students with disabilities on Individual Education Programs). At the middle/junior/senior high levels, the Department helps students stay in school through engagement and a rigorous academic approach, internships, and job or work experiences during the school day as coursework allows. Also, the Department provides leadership opportunities, peer-to-peer mentoring, and career technical education. The target population is youth. Workforce Services can assist the Department of Education in helping students understand the importance of career pathways. For instance, the American Job centers help students learn about professional opportunities. Referrals to WIOA program for clients who need additional training and education to find sustainable work would be directed to Workforce Services to begin to receive training, application assistance, and education opportunities.

Adult Education Program

The Wyoming Community College Commission's Adult Education program includes preparation that leads to a Wyoming high school equivalency certificate. The Adult Education program works closely with Workforce Services to enable adults and out-of-school youth to achieve basic educational goals to those who are lacking in education. Community colleges throughout the state are valuable partners in serving clients. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Referrals to Adult Education Programs are conducted when a client at an American Job Center is found to be lacking in education and needs to gain at least a high school equivalency certificate.

University of Wyoming

Workforce Services relies on the university primarily as a resource for research and special projects. It works with the Office of Research and Economic Development. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, youth, and employers. Referrals are sent to American

Job Centers to begin screening for furthering education or training of individuals, where if they are qualified they will work with the individual to educate or train the individual with the assistance of UW as needed.

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers

The target populations of these centers are adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Individuals who express their need to stop the use of drugs and/or alcohol are referred to rehabilitation centers to receive proper treatment to progress towards sustained employment.

Wyoming Economic Development Association (WEDA) and local economic development organizations

The goal of economic development is to increase the state tax base and provide better jobs, thus enhancing the well-being and prosperity Wyoming citizens. Workforce Services relies on such organizations for information and to assist with local developments of mutual interest. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, youth, and employers. When populations are uncovered that will benefit from Workforce Services they are referred to their closest American Job Center to be assisted.

Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, Economic Development Division

Like WEDA and other economic development groups, the Department of Workforce Services relies on the Economic Analysis Division for information. The Department obtains regular economic reports and demographic information from this unit. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, youth, and employers. When populations are uncovered that will benefit from Workforce Services they are referred to their closest American Job Center to be assisted.

Wyoming Workforce Alliance

The Wyoming Business Council, Wyoming Community College Commission, University of Wyoming, Department of Education, and the Department of Workforce Services formed a partnership to address workforce development issues at a state level. The Wyoming Workforce Alliance, established in fall 2002, aims to improve access to short-term training and to develop the competencies and work-readiness skills Wyoming's workers need to obtain employment and advance in today's job market. Also, the group responds to employers' needs by connecting them with qualified workers. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, youth, and employers. When populations are uncovered that will benefit from Workforce Services they are referred to their closest American Job Center to be assisted.

Motivation Education and Training (MET)

This year, the Department of Workforce Services began partnering with MET, as the National Farmworker Jobs Program (WIA Section 167) grantee, with the goal of serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers. As migrant and seasonal farmworkers are discovered that need education and training they will be served in an American Job Center and MET will act as a partner to serve these workers.

Chambers of commerce

One-Stop centers work with chambers of commerce personnel throughout the state. This is a key partnership for information dissemination and for strengthening Wyoming's business climate. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Businesses will be referred to the American Job Center if they are in need of employees, tax discussions, federal postings, and other services offered through Workforce Services. Chambers of Commerce assist local workforce in disseminating information to businesses on behalf of the Department of Workforce Services.

Wyoming Department of Corrections

Workforce Services coordinates with the Corrections Department to provide special education services for prisoners and ex-offenders in communities. The target populations are adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Referrals will come from DOJ to American Job Centers to assist ex-offenders find employment, become bonded, or explore training and education programs that will help find sustainable employment for these individuals.

Job Corps

Workforce Services assists Job Corps in helping individuals who cannot find and/or maintain employment and youth who did not succeed in high school, or who can't afford college. Job Corps serves young people ages 16 to 24, but focuses on kids over 18 because their maturity enables them to be more successful in Job Corps than younger teens. Workforce Services helps offer education programs to young people with the purpose of obtaining a high school diploma, high school equivalency certificate, taking technical courses, or preparing for employment. The target population is youth. As youth are discovered at American Job Centers that would benefit from the structure and services offered by Job Corps, youth will be referred to Job Corps. Likewise, Job Corps will refer any individuals needing assistance finding work, exploring education and training options, and/or other workforce services.

CLIMB Wyoming Workforce Services partners with CLIMB to provide services to single mothers. Funding is shared between the programs. The target populations are adults and youth. Referrals will go each way as funding is shared between programs such that if an individual were to be accepted into CLIMB Wyoming then the individual is referred to the Department of Workforce Services, and likewise to CLIMB if need is uncovered with the Department of Workforce Services.

Local school districts and secondary schools

Wyoming has 48 school districts that govern the secondary schools, including alternative schools for at-risk youth. The Department of Workforce Services partners with the districts and schools to serve program-eligible youth and others in need. The target population is youth. Referrals are made to the Department of Workforce Services to assist eligible youth with finding employment, further education and training, and skill training to prepare youth for the business world and a sustainable career.

Small Business Development Centers

The centers are located in several Wyoming communities. Workforce Services partners with the centers in instructing clients on how to open a business and write a business plan. The target populations are adults and dislocated workers. Referrals are shared between Small

Business Development Centers and American Job Centers as individuals who would benefit from these services are uncovered at each location.

Experience Works

Workforce Services partners with Experience Works through the Senior Community Service Employment Program to help older workers obtain unsubsidized employment. The program management is located within Workforce Services. The target population is adults. Referrals to Experience Works from Workforce Services will occur when an older worker is looking to obtain unsubsidized employment and would benefit from the services Experience Works provides.

Northwest Community Action Programs of Wyoming (NOWCAP)

NOWCAP, a private, non-profit community action agency, investigates problems posed by insufficient income and inadequate economic opportunities, with the intent of developing coordinated solutions to such problems. NOWCAP Services provides innovative services to people with developmental disabilities and brain injuries throughout Wyoming. NOWCAP currently has offices in Casper, Cody, Worland, and Rock Springs. Workforce Services partners with NOWCAP to provide Wagner-Peyser and WIOA services according to individual needs. The target populations are adults, dislocated, workers and youth. Referrals will be shared with NOWCAP and the Department of Workforce Services as clients in this population are uncovered.

e. Agricultural Outreach Plan (aop). Each State Agency Must Develop an Aop Every Four Years as Part of the Unified or Combined State Plan Required Under Sections 102 or 103 of WIOA. the Aop Must Include--

1. Assessment of Need

Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

All information is contained in the AOP sections below.

A. An Assessment of the Agricultural Activity in the State Means: 1) Identifying the Top Five Labor-intensive Crops, the Months of Heavy Activity, and the Geographic Area of Prime Activity; 2) Summarize the Agricultural Employers' Needs in the State (i.e. Are They Predominantly Hiring Local or Foreign Workers, Are They Expressing That There is a Scarcity in the Agricultural Workforce); and 3) Identifying Any Economic, Natural, or Other Factors That Are Affecting Agriculture in the State or Any Projected Factors That Will Affect Agriculture in the State.

Available data indicates that Wyoming farm and ranch numbers have declined somewhat, while the average age of farmers and ranchers in the state has increased. However, Wyoming has a significant number of large farms and ranches, and there is still a lot of agricultural activity in the state. According to U.S. Department of Agriculture data, Wyoming ranks eleventh nationally in total land used in farms and ranches, and first in average size of farms and ranches. The following statistics, which help to complete the picture of Wyoming agriculture, are provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service for 2014.

- Private ownership of Wyoming land: 42 percent (2012 data)
- Land used for agricultural production in the state: 30,400 million acres
- Estimated value of Wyoming's agricultural production: \$1 billion
- Number of Wyoming farms and ranches: 11,700
- Average size of Wyoming farms and ranches: 2,598 acres (no. 1 in U.S.)
- Other Wyoming national agricultural rankings

o Alfalfa hay production: 17th

o Barley production: 4th

o Pinto beans production: 4th

o Dry beans production: 9th

o Winter wheat: 34th

o Corn for grain: 35th

o Corn for silage: 32nd

o Number of beef cattle: 15th

o Sheep and lamb production: 4th

o Marketed sheep and lambs: 4th

o Wool production: 3rd

o Breeding sheep: 4th

o All hogs and pigs: 31st

The agricultural sector in Wyoming was valued at \$50 billion in 2014. Livestock production - the major component in Wyoming agriculture - was valued at \$1 billion that year, up 32 percent from 2013. Cattle accounted for over half of all cash receipts in 2014, and also led the way in value of production at \$937 million. Cattle and calves inventory on January 1, 2015 totaled 1.3 million head with a value of \$2.76 billion. Cattle inventory was up 2 percent from the same time in 2013.

Some downward movement was seen in agriculture. The January 1, 2015 inventory of sheep and lambs, at 345,000 head, was down three percent from 2014. Sheep and lambs were valued at \$72.8 million. The breeding sheep and market sheep-lamb inventories were both down 5,000 head, while the hogs and pigs inventory decreased seven percent to 84,000 head as of December 1, 2014. Hogs kept for breeding decreased six percent, while market hogs decreased by a total of 4,000 head.

Hay is by far the leading crop in Wyoming in terms production value, totaling \$317 million in 2014. Wyoming hay is used locally but is also sold throughout the United States. In succeeding order, the values of other Wyoming crops during the year were barley at \$40.4 million (second); sugar beets \$32.6 million (third); corn \$28.2 million (fourth); winter wheat \$27.6 million (fifth); and dry beans \$27.2 million (sixth).

All 23 Wyoming counties produce cattle and one or more types of hay. Also, 20 counties were involved in the sheep industry. Fewer counties participated in the production of other major crops.

The measurable breakout for other crops was winter wheat (five counties), barley (five counties), sugar beets (seven counties), and corn (five counties). The highest concentration of sugar beets occurred in Big Horn Basin counties (Big Horn, Park, and Washakie counties) of northwestern Wyoming. Other notable sugar beet production occurred in Platte and Goshen counties. Sugar beets have traditionally been a crop in which laborers, including Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, have participated in the production process.

Due to the state's climate, most Wyoming crop cycles begin in the spring and end in the fall, coinciding with favorable growing temperatures. U.S. Department of Agriculture data shows that alfalfa hay, barley, oats, and spring wheat are planted in March and April. Sugar beets are typically planted in April. Corn planting occurs toward the end of April and into May. Dry beans are also planted in May.

Winter wheat is typically planted in September and early October and is harvested in the summer. Barley, oats, beans, and corn are harvested in late summer and early fall, while sugar beets are harvested in October and early November.

Livestock production is also affected by the climate and topography of Wyoming. Lambing and calving typically begin in late March and extend into early May, when the harshness of winter is tempered by the coming of spring. Sheep and cattle, with their offspring, are usually moved to summer pastures in the high country by early June.

The production of most major crops in Wyoming has ceased being considered labor-intensive, which has affected available work opportunities for laborers. The use of herbicides and machinery considerably reduced the need for manual labor in the planting, tending, and harvesting processes. Machines typically do barley, corn, dry beans, oats, and wheat production. As a result, few agricultural workers are involved in the process. Hay farming has evolved to the point where most individual harvests are completed by one or two workers using machines that produce and haul very large bales. Few operations still rely on workers to haul 60- to 80-pound bales, and even fewer still free-stack hay without bailing it.

Agricultural work in the state is done by Wyoming residents, as well as other U.S. workers who come to the state. There is also considerable demand for foreign workers under the H-2A program, and some demand for migrant workers. In program year 2014 (July 2014 through June 2015), the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services processed 435 temporary agricultural job orders, of which 325

were H-2A related. Only 110 job orders were non-H-2A related. Of the 325 H-2A related job orders, 243 were received from out-of-state sources for non-Wyoming employers.

Minor growth in agricultural employment is expected in the state during the short term. The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, Research and Planning Section projected growth of 2.6 percent for the period of 2014 through 2016. The long term projection for the combined Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting sector is 269 jobs over a 10-year period (10.1 percent.)

See Item e.1.(A) 2) of this plan. It is anticipated that employers will continue to use herbicides and technological developments, which will limit the need for agricultural workers in Wyoming.

More than 91 percent of Wyoming's land is classified as rural. However, the state is very diverse because this is the region where the Rocky Mountains meet the Great Plains. Wyoming includes mountains and hills, river valleys, deserts, and plateaus. At a mean elevation of 6,700 feet, which is the second highest in the United States, the topography and location of Wyoming limit its crop productivity, but make it a good location for livestock. Rainfall averages 15 inches per year across Wyoming, and varies from west to east and across the mountain ranges. Cold winters and hot, dry summers are typical. The short growing season limits agricultural productivity in many places, with the frost-free period ranging from 60 days (central and western Wyoming) to 140 days (eastern Wyoming). These are all factors that affect Wyoming agriculture.

B. An Assessment of the Unique Needs of Farmworkers Means Summarizing Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (msfw) Characteristics (including if They Are Predominantly from Certain Countries, What Language(s) They Speak, the Approximate Number of Msfws in the State During Peak Season and During Low Season, and Whether They Tend to Be Migrant, Seasonal, or Year-round Farmworkers). This Information Must Take into Account Data Supplied by WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (nfjp) Grantees, Other Msfw Organizations, Employer Organizations, and State And/or Federal Agency Data Sources Such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor (dol) Employment and Training Administration.

Based on information provided by the Wyoming's NFJP grantee, Motivation Education and Training (MET), as well as Department of Workforce Services' experience, most MSFWs in the state speak English and / or Spanish. The U.S. Department of Agriculture does not provide this information, but does indicate there is a growing number of agricultural operators in Wyoming who are classified as Spanish, Hispanic or Latino.

Farmworkers and their families need health services, schooling for their children, and English-as-a-second-language support. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers also are entitled to receive counseling, training, and other employment services, including assistance with complaints, which are qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate to other groups. Workforce Services plans to provide services accordingly. The Department of Workforce Services will work to provide these services, in coordination with its partners.

With regard to housing needs, exact numbers of employer housing units provided for workers are not known. However, those who participate in the H-2A temporary agricultural work program have an average of just over four units per employer, which are provided for workers. Non-H-2A employers don't have as much need to provide housing, since workers often come from the local area. Of the 172

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers reported during July 2014 through June 2015 in Wyoming's labor management system, Wyoming at Work, 141 were seasonal, while only 31 were considered Migrant Farmworkers or Migrant Food Processing Workers. Also, the overall low number of job orders for this group suggests that the number of housing units which would be provided during the plan period - and would need to be inspected, would be small. Workforce Services plans to provide these inspection services during the period, as required.

The number of MSFWs in Wyoming appears to stay fairly consistent from quarter to quarter, and from year to year. For example, data in Wyoming's labor management system, Wyoming at Work, show totals that are within a few percentage points from quarter to quarter, during the period of July 2013 through June 2015. Migrant Farmworkers who used the system ranged numerically from 6 to 11, while Seasonal Non-Migrant Farmworkers ranged from 44 to 66. Migrant Food Processing Workers were consistently at two or less during that period.

2. Outreach Activities

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of MSFWs in the State and to locate and contact MSFWs who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. Contacting Farmworkers Who Are Not Being Reached by the Normal Intake Activities Conducted by the Employment Service Offices.

In accordance with 20 CFR 653.106(c), if Workforce Services identifies any day-haul operators in the area, staff will visit the operators for the purpose of providing information and services to MSFWs. The Department will also reach out to workers at their work sites and homes, and at the sites of other MSFW service providers. Outreach will be accomplished from Wyoming's America Job Centers by workforce specialists, as part of their assigned duties.

As stated in e (1) (B) of this plan, estimates of the number of such farmworkers in the state have been consistently low. The state of Wyoming is not designated by the U.S. Employment and Training Administration as a "significant state" for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker purposes. Also, none of Wyoming's local One-Stop centers are designated a "significant local office." As a result, the Department of Workforce Services ceased to retain a full-time agricultural outreach worker in 2011 since few Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers were believed to be in the state even during the summer crop-growing months. Outreach feedback and available data from the state's Wyoming at Work labor management system supported that action. Nevertheless, the Department recognizes there are still some Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers who come into the state seeking employment and training opportunities. However, few are being reported or otherwise identified as being in the state.

Each area of the state would have at least one American Job Center staff member who, as part of his or her duties, would provide outreach services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers. Depending upon need, more staff members might participate.

B. Providing Technical Assistance to Outreach Workers. Technical Assistance Must Include Trainings, Conferences, Additional Resources, and Increased Collaboration with Other Organizations on Topics Such as One-stop Center Services (i.e. Availability of Referrals to Training, Supportive Services, and Career Services, as Well as Specific Employment Opportunities), the Employment Service Complaint System,

Information on the Other Organizations Serving Msfws in the Area, and a Basic Summary of Farmworker Rights, Including Their Rights with Respect to the Terms and Conditions of Employment.

Because over 90 percent of Wyoming is rural and there are many dead spots to be found where electronic equipment will not receive the necessary signals to function, it is frequently difficult to provide computer or telephone access on-site to workers. However, informational brochures, other marketed materials, and cooperative links help to bridge the gap between services and the workers. They also help channel the workers to the local one-stop centers where a full array of services are readily available.

All of the America Job Centers post bulletins concerning worker rights and other important topics. Furthermore, all workforce staff are trained in the use of the complaint system. While there have been few MSFW complaints in recent years, staff know how to assist the workers. The only real obstacle in accomplishing this and the provision of other services is the lack of readily available Spanish speaking staff in each office. Nevertheless, there are sufficient numbers of fluent staff around the state to enable communication to occur. Also, the Wyoming at Work system is available in Spanish.

C. Increasing Outreach Worker Training and Awareness Across Core Programs Including the Unemployment Insurance (ui) Program and the Training on Identification of Ui Eligibility Issues.

All outreach workers in the Department of Workforce Services are merit system employees from the local America Job Centers in Wyoming. These employees have regular contact with the UI system, including the benefit program and employer taxation. Individuals performing outreach, like other local center staff, will have access to a "UI 101" video which provides an explanation of the UI system for claimants. The video answers basic questions about the processes for determining benefit amounts, filing a claim, eligibility issues etc. Also, they will have access to monthly updates to frequently asked questions (FAQs) about UI benefits and the UI tax system. Outreach workers will be instructed in the methodology for registering claimants for work, and what is required for work search activities. They will also have a basic awareness of the UI profiling system - its purpose and requirements; and will know how to refer employers to information sources for UI tax questions.

Because of the one-stop system that Wyoming uses in its local America Job Centers, outreach workers will be oriented to other organizations in the centers and will have opportunity for routine contact with them, so MSFWs can be referred to those organizations for help, as needed. These organizations include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, which provides disability services; Workers Compensation Division; Labor Standards Division, which handles complaints; the Wyoming Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Division; the Department of Family Services, which provides individual and family services to income eligible clients; and other organizations. Continuous orientation and information sharing will occur.

D. Providing State Merit Staff Outreach Workers Professional Development Activities to Ensure They Are Able to Provide High Quality Services to Both Jobseekers and Employers.

As stated in (2)(C), all Department of Workforce Services outreach workers are merit staff. They will be provided with self-improvement opportunities through available education providers, training that is provided to Department staff, and regular information from the

Administrative level of the Department. Examples of professional development opportunities that they will have are quarterly WIOA case management training, Bridges Out of Poverty training (for staff who work with individuals potentially affected by poverty), new staff orientation, self-paced training modules, workshops and conferences, in such areas as customer service. They will also be instructed specifically in their duties as outreach workers. Furthermore, the State Monitor Advocate / Foreign Labor Certification Programs Manager conducts staff training and works with them outreach workers in the provision of informational seminars. Outreach workers will have the opportunity to apply for open positions within the Department of Workforce Services and other parts of state government, as well as position advertised in the Department's labor management system, Wyoming at Work.

E. Coordinating Outreach Efforts with Nfjp Grantees as Well as with Public and Private Community Service Agencies and Msfw Groups.

Workforce specialists will prepare materials presenting the Department's services. Such materials will be shared with the farmworkers and their families, MET and other service providers who have indicated a willingness to share them with workers and their families. In addition, the Department will share health and safety materials and complaint system directions. Workers and their families will be assisted in filing complaints. As much as possible, services will be provided to each Migrant or Seasonal Farmworker in his or her own language.

Workforce Services will provide opportunities for individuals to register in the Wyoming at Work labor management system and will provide orientation regarding its use. The system is accessible in Spanish.

MET does field work in order to reach Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers who may not visit its office in Powell, Wyo. Such workers might be in the Powell area or elsewhere in the Bighorn Basin. The American Job Center in Powell is near the MET office. The Bighorn Basin also is served by job centers in Cody and Worland. Job center staff will coordinate with MET staff to provide outreach services where needed and in the workers' language. Because MET also serves dependents of farmworkers, the coordinated effort has the potential for providing effective services to more people.

3. Services Provided to Farmworkers and Agricultural Employers Through the One-stop Delivery System.

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. Providing the Full Range of Employment and Training Services to the Agricultural Community, Both Farmworkers and Agricultural Employers, Through the One-stop Delivery System. This Includes:

- i. How Career and Training Services Required Under WIOA Title I Will Be Provided to Msfws Through the One-stop Centers;
- ii. How the State Serves Agricultural Employers and How it Intends to Improve Such Services.

Services will be provided under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act by merit-based public employees. Provisions of both acts are administered through the one-stop system in Wyoming, which includes all local job centers.

Under WIOA, states are provided with significant flexibility to innovate within the workforce system, with various allowable statewide employment and training activities. These efforts are meant to ensure a high-quality workforce system and continuous improvement. Wyoming will use this approach to serve both farmworkers and non-farmworkers.

The Department will partner with Motivation Education and Technology (MET), the National Farmworker Jobs Program grantee, which administers WIOA Section 167 in Wyoming. The Department also will coordinate with other organizations to provide services to farmworkers and agricultural employers. It is not expected that MET will be located within one-stop centers. However, in Powell, MET's local office is located close to an American Job Center. Easy access is available for personnel from both offices. Workforce Services plans to continue fostering a quality working relationship with MET through the memorandum-of-understanding process to ensure that all available and necessary services are provided. These services include outreach to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers, as defined previously in this plan.

Career services, training, and related assistance will be provided to eligible farmworkers and related youth through WIOA and the Wagner-Peyser Program. These services may be received in person at the job centers. Also, Wagner-Peyser services are available electronically through the Wyoming at Work system, which is available in English and Spanish.

In-person services will include assistance in registering for work in the Wyoming at Work system, resume preparation and repository, job matching, labor market information, skills testing, and career planning. Priority of service for veterans, which is enforced through Federal and State policies, will be provided to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers. Through the job centers, workers will also have access to the full array of other services provided by Workforce Services and its partners.

Services also will be available for individuals with disabilities. The Department of Workforce Services uses a productive internal partnership to serve their needs. This partnership is between the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Employment and Training Division.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains an active presence in most local American Job Centers where workers are served within the One-Stop system. Division representatives also travel to other centers where a continuous presence is not maintained. Services for individuals with disabilities are provided based on need and coordinated plans.

A variety of methods is used to share costs between the two divisions. For example, each organization may pay a portion of an individual's training program. Vocational Rehabilitation also provides adaptive devices for some clients in training. In addition, the divisions coordinate to assist secondary school-aged students with individual education plans designed to help them achieve a high school diploma or a high-school equivalency education certificate.

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B. Marketing the Employment Service Complaint System to Farmworkers and Other Farmworker Advocacy Groups.

It is anticipated that this will continue to occur through cooperative relationships with other MSFW service providers and through outreach to the workers. Instructions for the complaint system are being incorporated into the Department's Agricultural Recruitment

System policies and procedures, which will be available to all local America Job Center staff and Department administrators and managers, which will greatly facilitate marketing awareness and use of the complaint system.

C. Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System to Agricultural Employers and How it Intends to Improve Such Publicity.

Workforce Services' agricultural recruitment system policies and procedures are still in the development phase, but are expected to be finished in PY 2015. Department business representatives already work closely with employers to ascertain and fulfill their employment needs. However, once the policies and procedures are completed in one volume, this work has the potential to be greatly enhanced because of its availability to employers and increased knowledge of the system among America Job Center staff. It is anticipated that the policies and procedures will be published on the Department's website.

4. Other Requirements

A. Collaboration

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other MSFW service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

In 2015 the Department will seek to establish a memorandum of understanding with MET, the WIOA Section 167 NFJP grantee in Wyoming, to facilitate information sharing and coordination of services to such farmworkers, including outreach activities. Other memoranda will also be explored, based on State of Wyoming policy regarding such associations. MET has one Spanish-speaking employee on staff. The Department currently has none in the Bighorn Basin, except the American Job Center manager in Cody and an employee in Worland.

In addition to MET, the Department will continue to contact and coordinate with other organizations known to serve farmworkers or that potentially will serve them. These include:

- Park County school districts
- Goshen County School District No. 1
- Absaroka, Inc. Head Start
- Migrant Health Program
- Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc.
- Wyoming Primary Care Association

Workforce Services will seek out other organizations that might help to provide services and partner with those organizations whenever opportunities arise. Some organizations that were working in Wyoming -- such as the Migrant Head Start Program -- are not currently funded. The numbers and types of organizations that provide services to MSFWs in Wyoming are continually changing.

In the most recent reporting year, MET provided services to about 60 to 70 farmworkers. Some of these workers were contacted through outreach. Many of them visited the organization's office in Powell, Wyo., for services. It is anticipated that about the same number will receive services during this plan period and via similar venues.

How many Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers were served by other organizations in Wyoming is unknown. Migrant Health is just beginning to make services available again, after being gone from the Bighorn Basin for months. Frequently, definitions of farmworkers used by other organizations vary somewhat from the Department of Workforce Services definitions. Nevertheless, the Department will coordinate as much as possible with these partners.

It is anticipated that most Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers will be found in the Bighorn Basin of northwest Wyoming. The Department of Workforce Services, through its three American Job Center locations in the area, plans to coordinate closely with Motivation Education and Training, and others to provide outreach services. American Job Centers in other regions of the state also will provide outreach based on established need, but it is not anticipated that these services will involve MET.

B. Review and Public Comment.

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP. The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

All comments pertaining to the Agricultural Outreach Plan are being considered as required. In an effort to comply with this 45-30 day requirement, the Department of Workforce Services prepared a PY 2015 Agricultural Outreach Plan by the end of October 2015, on the basis of last year's planning guidance. This was done after consulting with representatives of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), inasmuch as ETA had not released updated guidance for PY 2015, by that time. The plan was sent to the NFJP grantee, public agencies, and other organizations as required.

With the late release of the new ETA planning guidance in December 2015, the Department re-wrote the plan to conform to the new guidance and requirements from ETA. The 45-30 day requirement is being observed a second time.

Commenting parties are being contacted, in response to their contribution(s) to the plan. The requirements to inform them whether their comments have been included in the plan and, if not, to explain why, are being followed.

All comments and recommendations will be submitted with this plan to ETA, by the Department of Workforce Services.

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services is observing the requirement to make the proposed plan available to the MET, the NFJP grantee; public agencies; agricultural employer organizations; and other organizations expressing an interest in the plan. This is being done, as required, at least 45 days prior to the expected submission date of the plan to the Region IV administrator, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. A 30-day comment period is being provided to these parties. Also, the Department of Workforce Services is responding to all comments received regarding this plan.

Please see Appendix E: State Plan Public Comments, organizations, and responses <http://bit.ly/1Y4ylod>

The Department of Workforce Services observed the requirements of the public comment period - twice, as it indicated it would, in its original plan submission. On 12/15/16, a full 45 days prior to the end of the comment period, the Agricultural Outreach Plan was again sent to the following person's and organizations. Results are also stated.

1. Stacey Taylor, Deputy Director, Motivation Education and Training (MET), taylor@metinc.org. MET is the National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee in Wyoming.

No comment regarding the plan, although the State Monitor Advocate and Ms. Taylor had already been discussing data sharing and a facilitating Memorandum of Understanding.

2. Betsy Sell, Vice Superintendent, Park County School District 6, bsell@park6.org

No comment regarding the plan.

3. Kevin Mitchell, Superintendent, Park County School District 1, klmitchell@pcsd1.org

No comment regarding the plan.

4. Donna Fields, Director of Curriculum (Federal Funding), Goshen County School District 1, dfields@goshen1.org

No comment regarding the plan.

5. Velma Stingley, Wyoming Area Service Coordinator, Montana Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Council, Inc., vstingley@mtmigrantcouncil.org

No input was offered by this organization regarding the Agricultural Outreach Plan. However, Velma Stingley, Area Service Coordinator with the “Agricultural Worker Health & Services” office in Powell, Wyoming called the State Monitor Advocate and discussed the plan. Afterward she wrote an email to the same, requesting a copy of the new herding / livestock production regulation at 20 CFR 655.200-235. Ms. Stingley also attempted to call once more afterward, to coordinate with the State Monitor Advocate’s office, to inform H2A workers and employers that her organization operates basic health clinics that specialize in making preventive health care accessible to agricultural workers. This information was conveyed subsequently by email to the State Monitor Advocate by Claudia Stephens of her office. Inquiry was made about attending H2A orientations that were being planned for the state, in an effort to inform agricultural workers and employers about the availability of these clinic services and answer questions they may have. Velma told me that you would like to be sent an agreement. Attached please find a draft agreement. Please let me know of any changes you would like to see, as soon as possible.

DWS Response: A copy of the new H-2A regulation for the herding / livestock production industry was sent to Ms. Stingley by email from the State Monitor Advocate / Foreign Labor Certification Programs Manager. Also, the State Monitor Advocate contacted Claudia Stephens by email. DWS will review the draft memorandum of understanding. It was explained to Ms. Stephens that all memoranda of this type must be reviewed by the State Attorney General’s office, which can take several weeks or longer. It was reaffirmed that the State Monitor Advocate and DWS wishes to work with the Agricultural Worker Health and Services organization.

6. Ray Macchia, Director - WY Legal Aid, macchia@lawyoming.org

Two attempts were made to reach this individual, to provide a copy of the Agricultural Outreach Plan to Wyoming Legal Aid. Both failed.

7. Hannah Wickey, Communication O&E Manager (Special Populations Contact), WY Primary Care Association, hannah@wypca.org

Ms. Wickey did not have any suggestions for the plan. However, she communicated with the State Monitor Advocate / Foreign Labor Certification Programs Manager to inquire if he had any additional information about the location of communication dead spots in Wyoming. In the work of her organization, they have also found this to be a recurring barrier and it would be great to know where those dead spots exist.

DWS Response: Local feedback from cellphone users indicates that one particular company has had good success, with regard to receptivity, throughout the state. Other phone companies seem to have experienced lesser success. It was explained that in those cases where employers place their workers in areas with poor receptivity, the employers are required to visit them at regular intervals, to make sure they are safe.

Follow-up Comment from Hannah Wickey: Ms. Wickey stated that she has tried to gain the interest of a national organization to do some data work in this area. The information “would be very valuable to organizations across the state trying to do outreach for services. If anything interesting comes from her efforts, this will be shared with the State Monitor Advocate / Foreign Labor Certification Programs Manager.

DWS Response: All H-2A employers engaged in the herding / livestock production industry are required to give that assurance (of making contact with their workers) in areas where communication potential is limited. Inasmuch as they are located throughout Wyoming, it can

be effectively said it is statewide. But it is only required of herding / livestock production employers. More specifically, there are larger concentrations of them in Southern Carbon County, the far west, southwest and Red Desert areas, and in the Big Horn Basin. There are also some in the areas of Laramie and Natrona Counties.

8. Pamela Bell, Director's Executive Assistant, WY Department of Agriculture, pamela.bell@wyo.gov

No suggestion or request was made by the Wyoming Department of Agriculture regarding the Agricultural Outreach Plan. However, the Department asked the State Monitor Advocate / Foreign Labor Certification Programs Manager to be a part of an agricultural discussion regarding Foreign Labor Certification programs and the State Monitor Advocate system, and the Department of Workforce Service's interactions with the U.S. Department of Labor. This meeting occurred near the end of March 2016. Also, relations have been established with other organizations that participated in that meeting.

9. Carry Martin, Executive Secretary, USDA - Wyoming, carry.martin@wy.usda.gov

No comment regarding the plan.

10. Ken Hamilton, Executive V.P., Wyoming Farm Bureau, khamilton@wyfb.org

No comment regarding the plan.

No additional comments were received during the public comment period.

C. Data Assessment.

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

on LEARS reporting system and Wagner-Peyser ETA 9002 data, the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services has shown improvement in its services to MSFWs, and in meeting set goals for quality and quantitatively proportionate services. The improvements are based on continuous education, efforts to improve, and increased data accuracy.

Equity ratio indicators in the LEARS system portray positive developments in the past two years (PY 2013 and PY 2014) compared to PY 2011 and PY 2012. In PY 2011, the Department was only achieving three out of five equity ratio indicators. This actually decreased to two at the end of PY 2012. However, with improvements in data and greater staff education and effort, the outcome for PY 2013 was four out of five. That increased again in PY 2014, when the Department achieved a performance of five out of five.

Minimum service levels, as portrayed by the LEARS system, have not changed appreciably during this period of PY 2011 through PY 2014. The Department has consistently been performing at a level where it has been reaching four of the seven goals. Greater effort will be

made to reach these goals, particularly with regard to the number of field checks and outreach contacts that are done. The Department will continue to pursue a path of staff education, coordinated services to MSFWs, and monitoring to achieve the desired results.

The ETA 9002C Wagner-Peyser reports showed continuous improvement in the entered employment rate for MSFWs. In PY 2011, the four-quarter rate at the end of the year was 63 percent. However, in the following three years, it was raised to 65 percent, 66 percent and then 71 percent in PY 2014.

D. Assessment of Progress

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

As planned, the Department of Workforce Services has worked with partner organizations to identify Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in the state. However, these efforts have been hampered by changing circumstances – precipitated, at least partly, by low numbers of such workers and their families. Some organizations have ceased to operate farmworker programs or lost funding. Others changed locations. Also, the newness of some relationships between Workforce Services and partner organizations has made it difficult to establish a rhythm that will benefit each partner and the customers. The Department will renew its efforts to reach out to all potential partners and establish effective working relationships. Efforts to establish a stronger relationship with MET will be paramount. An area of emphasis will be data sharing, where possible, if it would be useful to the partners.

As planned, the Department was successful in making some improvements in its Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker reporting system. This was accomplished by working with the system contractor, Geographic Solutions, Inc. and the national Monitor Advocate's Office. The State Monitor Advocate feels the system is providing more accurate data. He will continue to monitor system output.

Workforce Services' agricultural recruitment system policies and procedures are still in the development phase. The project was slowed somewhat by the U.S. Department of Labor's proposed rules for the H-2A herder and livestock production industry, and by WIOA, which will have considerable effect on the policies and procedures. Until now, the Department has used Federal regulations and guidance letters, and some other materials to carry out its Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program. While these have been good resources, their fragmented nature has made it difficult to train staff members and administer the system. The Department sees the need to pull all of these materials together under one cover, and add some policies and procedures that pertain particularly to Wyoming. Once this project is finished, Department personnel will be specifically trained according to these policies and procedures.

The 2013–2014 plan called for Wyoming's American Job Centers to do agricultural outreach. This was supposed to be done by assigned workforce specialists as part of their overall duties. During the plan period, very little outreach activity was reported. This result would be expected if there were no Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers working in the area, or if such workers visited the job centers. Greater focus will be placed on finding such workers, if they are in the state, and providing the necessary outreach to them through the job centers and MET.

The plan for program year 2013–2014 called for outreach to be done by the Department through personal contacts, the distribution of printed materials, community opportunity fairs, migrant health fairs, and the like. Technology also was supposed to be used, as needed, in those efforts based on operational capability. These activities will be pursued in program year 2015.

Core workforce services, intensive services, training, and supportive services were planned for program year 2013–2014. These services were provided to individual workers who visited the job centers. Language assistance also was available. In PY 2015, services will be provided under the provisions of Wagner–Peyser and WIOA. Language assistance will be provided.

The Department had some success filling agricultural job orders with domestic workers in PY 2013–2014. This was a challenge, given the number of H–2A job orders in the mix. H–2A employers have exhibited a tendency to want to employ foreign workers who have worked for them in past years. The Department is aware of this situation and is working with employers, their agents, and job applicants to assure that domestic workers have opportunities for employment. Two seminars have already been held in PY 2015, for this purpose and to explain the components of the new H–2A rule for the herding and livestock production industry.

Section 653.107(c) of the regulation states, “The plan shall be based on the actual conditions which exist in the particular state, taking into account the state agency’s history of providing outreach services, the estimated number of MSFWs in the state, and the need for outreach services in that state.”

Wyoming has not identified many Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in recent years. The Wyoming at Work system identified only 172 such workers for the period July 2014 through June 2015. Nearly 82 percent were seasonal non–migrant farmworkers, many of whom live year–round in the Bighorn Basin.

It is anticipated that some migrant workers will come to Wyoming during the plan period. However, setting a number of visits is problematic because of the low number of reported outreach contacts in recent years. Workforce Services set a goal of 35 last year and failed to meet that goal. However, by working with MET in the current planning period, the Department feels that 35 is still a reasonable goal.

E. State Monitor Advocate

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The Wyoming State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

Wagner-peyser Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3));

The State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111 (State agency staffing requirements) if the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers;

3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and

4. State agency merit-based public employees provide Wagner-Peyser Act-funded labor exchange activities in accordance with Department of Labor regulations.

f. Wagner Peyser Program Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	PY 2016 Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated Level	PY 2017 Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

"Effectiveness in Serving Employers" is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

Program-specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

a. Aligning of Content Standards

Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

The Adult Education program in Wyoming has adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for all Adult Education and literacy providers funded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. The CCRS standards are aligned with the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards in English/language arts and math adopted in June 2012. The Wyoming State Board of Education has made no amendments to the original which aligns to Common Core State Standards. This alignment offers challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended [20 U.S.C. 6311 (b)(1)].

The College and Career Readiness Standards ensure that secondary students and Adult Education high-school equivalency students graduate prepared for postsecondary education, training programs, and the workforce. They reflect the knowledge and skills students need to be successful in the 21st century, including problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, research, and the ability to use technology. The standards will be fully implemented by July 1, 2016 in all Adult Education programs.

The adoption of The College and Career Readiness Standards and Career Pathways will drive Adult Education professional development, acquisition of textbook and technology-based resources, as well as selection of formative and summative assessments. Aligning the standards and Career Pathways provides all adult students with a similar academic opportunity to be prepared for postsecondary education, training programs, and the workforce without remediation.

Adult Education providers will ensure that all instructors implement standards-based education across their programs. It will be required that 80 percent of the Adult Education instructors participate in ongoing professional development that supports both standards-based education and Career Pathways for all student levels.

Revision note: The Career Pathway information was removed from this section and added to the “organization” section of Local Activities.

b. Local Activities

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (section 203 of WIOA)

- Adult education;

- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that— Page 219
 - Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 - Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Wyoming will conduct a Request for Proposal process for eligible entities to apply for Adult Education grant awards for both federal and state funds. Successful entities will be awarded three-year grants to provide educational services listed below.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)•Adult education;•Literacy;•Workplace adult education and literacy activities;•Family literacy activities;•English language acquisition activities;•Integrated English literacy and civics education;•Workforce preparation activities; or•Integrated education and training that—1.Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and2.Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

A description of the activities may be found below under the “Content” section.

Eligible providers able to write for these grants are organizations that have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities and may include the following:1. Local educational agency;2. Community-based or faith-based organization;3. Volunteer literacy organization;4. Institution of higher education;5. Public or private nonprofit agency;6. Library;7. Public housing authority;8. Nonprofit institution that is not described in items 1 through 7 and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;9. Consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in 1 through 8; and10. A partnership between an employer and an entity described in items 1 through 8.Funding eligible local providers

The Wyoming Community College Commission will use the thirteen (13) “considerations” specified in section 231 (e) of WIOA listed on the following pages to fund each eligible provider in establishing and operating programs that provide adult education and literacy activities including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The request for proposals will include the 13 considerations and ask respondents to summarize how they meet the described elements. Readers will be given a rubric and scoring guide that includes these

13 considerations. Funding will be determined using a performance-based formula. Base funding will consider enrollment targets, dropout rates, and poverty levels, and will incorporate a component for rural areas. Performance will consider educational functioning level increases, employment, high-school equivalency completions, and entry into postsecondary education or training. Distribution of funds to eligible providers shall follow the State provisions guidance in WIOA title II Subtitle B Sec.222 which states:

(a) STATE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS. — Each eligible agency receiving a grant under section 211(b) for a fiscal year—

(1) shall use not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231 (adult education grants to eligible providers as defined below) and to carry out section 225 (programs for corrections education), of which not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out section 225;

(2) shall use not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to carry out State leadership activities under section 223; and

(3) shall use not more than 5 percent of the grant funds, or \$85,000, whichever is greater for the administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

Local Administrative Costs defined in WIOA Section 233 are limited. Not less than 95 percent shall be expended for carrying out adult education and literacy activities; and the remaining amount, not to exceed 5 percent, shall be used for planning, administration, professional development, provide services aligned with the state plan, and fulfill one-stop partner responsibilities.

SPECIAL RULE: In cases where the cost limits described above are too restrictive to allow for the activities described, the provider shall negotiate with WCCC in order to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes. A waiver form will be available during the RFP process.

CONSIDERATIONS: Section 231 (e) of WIOA describes 13 considerations in awarding grants or contracts which the WCCC shall consider—

(1) the degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to— (A) regional needs as identified in the local plan under section 108; and (B) serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals— (i) who have low levels of literacy skills; or (ii) who are English language learners;

(2) the ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;

(3) past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, to meet State-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy;

(4) the extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners;

(5) whether the eligible provider's program— (A) is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and (B) uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;

(6) whether the eligible provider's activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;

(7) whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;

(8) whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

(9) whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means;

(10) whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways;

(11) whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with Federal, State, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

(12) whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and

(13) whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—From grant funds made available under section 222(a)(1), WCCC shall award multi-year grants or contracts, on a competitive basis, to eligible providers within the State to enable the eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State.

The Wyoming Community College Commission will advertise the request for proposals as a three-year, competitive grant to all eligible providers in Wyoming. The RFP will include sections to apply for 1) Adult Education and 2) Corrections Education with descriptions of allowable activities.

In order to provide direct and equitable access to apply for Title II grant funds, a “Public Notice” will be posted electronically on the Wyoming Community College website and same notice will be advertised in prominent newspapers across the state. A minimum of one Bidders conference will be hosted for potential applicants to answer questions and clarify criteria contained in the RFP. Questions and answers will be posted on the WCCC website for public reference. Direct application to the WCCC for all applicants will be used. Readers will be provided a rubric to rank applications for funding.

REQUIRED LOCAL ACTIVITIES.—WCCC shall require that each eligible provider receiving a grant or contract under subsection (a) use the grant or contract to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently.

Scope

The Wyoming Community College Commission will fund local eligible providers to provide adult education services to “eligible adults” 16 years old and older, who are not required to be enrolled in secondary school. The scope of the local Adult Education program activities must demonstrate success with all levels of students, including those with low levels of literacy, those with disabilities (including learning disabilities), and/or English language learners in services described below. In addition, they must provide students with the skills needed for successful transition to postsecondary education, training, or employment.

Under WIOA there is a renewed emphasis on aligning comprehensive adult education services with the integrated services of the other core program partners. The development of a seamless workforce development system of complimentary services is our primary focus. Adult Education providers, as one aspect of their program, will need to effectively demonstrate their ability to provide integrated education and training which is provided concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

With recent changes in Wyoming’s economy a greater focus will be needed on increasing low skilled individuals’ transition to postsecondary education and skills training, especially for the Intermediate Low and High students, ABE and ESL levels 3 and 4 in NRS. Transitioning students between ELA and Adult Education and into Integrated Education and Training (IET) activities as appropriate will be developed. Alignment of the activities with contextualized curriculum and materials, as well as OCTAE’s Employability Skills Framework, will be used for both components.

The Commission will require eligible providers to demonstrate their effectiveness by detailing prior program performance and past effectiveness. All applicants, prior recipients, and new applicants will provide data demonstrating their ability to help students make measurable academic gain. Prior recipients will use LACES data to show how they met state-negotiated performance measures. LACES is the Adult Education program’s student data management system for the State of Wyoming.

New organizations must show data demonstrating student learning gain, especially with low-literacy level students and English language learners. The application will demonstrate how the students will obtain the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary education, skills training, or employment.

A minimum of three years' history detailing the organization's management of grants and an organizational chart containing the adult education program will be required. This will ensure that potential new programs provide background and experience that includes services tailored for the primary population(s) and area served. The RFP will also require a description of project management which will help to ensure successful outcomes.

All programs must provide sufficient intensity and quality of instruction for participants to make substantial learning gains. Programs must also provide flexible schedules to coordinate with local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete adult education programs.

Content

Each eligible Adult Education provider must verify that activities will be conducted by highly qualified instructors, counselors, or administrators and confirm that all staff will participate in ongoing, high-quality professional development.

Each eligible provider will ensure that instructors offer a variety of instructional strategies that engage students and promote student persistence and retention. Contextualized instruction, participatory learning, peer tutoring, individualized instruction, and distance learning capabilities shall be included. Career counseling/advising will enhance the instructional strategies used to integrate academics, and soft skills/social capital skills to improve the students' ability to gain employment, enter postsecondary education, or enter a training apprenticeship program.

Curriculum that supports high school equivalency attainment, measurable skill gains, and Career Pathways shall be employed in all Adult Education and Literacy Program services. Instruction in all content areas (reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics, and English language acquisition) shall be delivered by staff knowledgeable in the essential components of reading instruction, or who will participate in State leadership activities focused on the essential components of reading. Instructional staff must use effective, scientific, evidence- or research-based instructional delivery models for students in all content areas. Prospective program providers will articulate how distance learning and other modes of technology will be integrated into instruction to support digital literacy attainment, as well as meet students' specific learning needs.

The Adult Education program staff will work with core partner programs and the services they provide in order to help students navigate system challenges that can be barriers for smooth integration to those partner programs. Eligible providers will also articulate how they plan to share students' academic and career plans with other agencies and support services within the local One-Stop system. Program staff must be willing to cooperate with agency partners to provide wrap-around services needed for the success of mutual clients.

Ongoing labor market analysis will be necessary so instructors have a working knowledge of regional career opportunities in order to plan appropriate instruction for students.

All Adult Education providers must ensure that local Adult Education staff use State–required intake data forms, follow Adult Education State assessment policies, and enter attendance data accurately and in a timely manner. The Adult Education State Office will provide ongoing training in order to maintain accurate data sets for data matching and statewide performance reporting to the federal government.

All Adult Education providers must ensure their activities provide contextualized instruction, including integrated education and training where possible. This will allow an individual to acquire the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and skills training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Descriptions of Adult Education and Literacy Services

Adult Education

The term “adult education and literacy activities” means programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce literacy, and readiness activities.

Literacy

The term “literacy” means an individual’s ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at proficiency levels necessary to function on the job, in the family, and in society.

Workplace adult education and literacy activities

The term “workplace adult education and literacy activities” means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization, at a workplace or an off-site location, that is designed to improve workforce productivity.

Workforce preparation activities

The term “workforce preparation activities” means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical-thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. This includes competencies in using resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

Integrated education and training

The term “integrated education and training” means a service approach that:

1. Provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with both workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster; and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement. Plans will be sent to the state for approval or negotiation in options for small rural areas.

Family literacy activities

The term “family literacy activities” means activities that are of sufficient intensity and quality to make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects of a family. Such activities also better enable parents or family members to support their children’s learning needs and integrate the following activities:

1. Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency.
2. Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children.
3. Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
4. An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

Family literacy does not require state or federal funding to operate. It may be established through local partnerships collaborating to offer the activities to serve the children and family and the adult education program providing the literacy services.

English language acquisition activities

These activities are designed to help individuals who are in English language acquisition programs attain competence in reading, math, writing, and comprehension of the English language. These are a part of the adult education suite of services leading to:

1. Attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and
2. Transition to postsecondary education and training, or
3. Employment.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

The term “integrated English literacy and civics education” means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in

the English language and acquire basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and will be delivered in combination with Integrated Education and Training.

The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to:

1. Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency, and
2. Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Organization

The Adult Education program application will require each respondent to clearly articulate how their instructional delivery model will be aligned, coordinated, and linked with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community with the goal of developing career pathways with local partners. Partnerships may include elementary and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, local workforce investment boards, One-Stop centers, job-training programs, social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, and nonprofit organizations. This alignment must include flexible scheduling so that adult education services coordinate with the students' wrap-around support services and logistical needs. The provider must demonstrate the ability to provide services to individuals with a disability. The delivery model must be of sufficient intensity and duration so students will exit with the necessary skills to attain their career and educational goals.

Each Adult Education provider must have the capacity to support the high-quality data information system (LACES) necessary to collect and report demographics, measurable skill gains, and outcomes appropriate to the services being provided.

Primary indicators of performance for the WIOA annual statewide performance report will include:

- Participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after the student exits from the program,
- Participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after the student exits from the program,
- Median earnings from unsubsidized employment in the second quarter after the student exits from the program,
- Percentage of students who obtain a postsecondary credential or a high school equivalency certificate,
- Percentage of students who participate in an education or training program, and
- Percentage achieving a measurable educational skill gain.

Only the last indicator will be reported for performance the first two years of the grant. The other indicators will be collected and reported as base-line data for future performance negotiations.

While Career Pathways and transition to postsecondary are not required local activities under WIOA, they are explicit purposes of the law. The State of Wyoming is requiring each local provider to submit a Career Pathway plan demonstrating the Adult Education role and services in general career pathways development for their service area. The Career Pathways plan is a gap analysis created in partnership with the local Workforce Advisory Group (WAG) which describes: a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training and other services that:

(A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;(B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) (referred to individually in this Act as an “apprenticeship”, except in section 171);(C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;(D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;(E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;(F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and(G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

At the center of Career Pathways development and guiding this model is a Workforce Advisory Group (WAG) from each service area. The WAG shall lead efforts in the local area to develop and implement career pathways within the local area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

Adult Education providers must clearly describe how the local adult education activities partner with other education institutions (including high schools, colleges, or other technical training programs), local workforce partners, vocational rehabilitation, Registered Apprenticeships, and other agencies to fulfill adult education’s role in WIOA. Special attention to the description of the provider’s plans for their integrated education and training design must demonstrate this role.

Articulation agreements are to be used as the mechanism of establishing interoperability and continued two-way communication between core partners, WAGs and One-Stop offices. Adult education providers must demonstrate that they have cross-agency agreements in place to support adult students in simultaneously reaching their academic and career goals.

Required progress reporting will include monthly data reports on measurable skills gain and high school equivalency attainment, quarterly narratives on successes and challenges, and end-of- year summary reports.

All Adult Education providers requesting funding for English language acquisition programs must clearly demonstrate a need for additional program services and civics education. Program instruction must be provided by high-quality instructors who must attend ongoing, professional development activities.

DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS; WCCC shall ensure that— (1) all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants or contracts under this section; and (2) the same grant or contract announcement process and application process is used for all eligible providers in the State.

SPECIAL RULE.—WCCC will not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not individuals described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 203(4).

ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term “eligible individual” means an individual—

(A) who has attained 16 years of age;

(B) who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and

(C) who—

(i) is basic skills deficient;

(ii) does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or

(iii) is an English language learner.

Special Rule

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

c. Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;

- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Grants for Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals authorized under WIOA Section 225 will be competed with the same announcement used for the public adult education instructional program under Section 231. It will also include the requirements and priorities of Subpart C in title II of WIOA. The priorities include: 1. Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program. The Wyoming Community College Commission will request that prospective providers include a description of how program priorities will be established for individuals who are likely to leave the institution within five years of participation in the Adult Education program. Each applicant will identify from the list above the academic programs they intend to offer to the individuals who are likely to leave the institution within 5 years of participation in the program. 2. The eight correctional academic programs listed above (in a-h) shall be the allowable activities under this section. 3. Each program will report inmate/participant data in LACES/NexGen, the same reporting system used by the public programs. This includes assessments, attendance, high school equivalency testing and basic demographic information. In addition, monthly, quarterly and annual reports will be sent to the Adult Education state office.

Each eligible agency that receives assistance provided under this section shall annually prepare and submit to the State a report on the progress with respect to the programs and activities carried out under this section, including the relative rate of recidivism for the criminal offenders served. Only academic gains will be reported initially.

Awards will be made to providers offering adult education services to correctional and other institutions (including prisons, jails, reformatories, work farms, detention centers, halfway houses, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders). Distributions of funds shall follow Title II Subtitle B – State provisions which states "Sec 222 (a)(1) shall use not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section

231 and to carry out section 225, of which not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out section 225” which is Programs for Corrections Education and other Institutionalized Individuals."

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION.—The term “correctional institution” means any—

(A) prison;

(B) jail;

(C) reformatory;

(D) work farm;

(E) detention center; or

(F) halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

CRIMINAL OFFENDER.—The term “criminal offender” means any individual who is charged with or convicted of any criminal offense.

d. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

1. Describe How the State Will Establish and Operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Programs Under Section 243 of WIOA, for English Language Learners Who Are Adults, Including Professionals with Degrees and Credentials in Their Native Countries.

Wyoming’s English language acquisition population is approximately 20 percent of the students served by adult education. The majority are undocumented. The rural nature of our state and the dispersed population make it a challenge for most programs to offer an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program. Wyoming is willing to explore our options in implementing the IELCE and to target areas of the state having a critical mass of eligible students. The state envisions offering IELCE Program services through a separate competitive RFP process. These services will be intended for English language learners (ELL) who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries. As with adult education students, the focus will be to provide the ELL students with the knowledge and skills necessary for entry into the workforce, post-secondary education, or an integrated education and skills training program. The state will use a targeted approach to define the area(s) of the state which have the greatest need. The provider(s) will submit in their application a design for a pilot including the in-demand industry or entrepreneurial training they intend to offer. Each provider will continue to use the civics curriculum they developed for their community and materials developed for civic participation. The IELCE programs will provide educational services consisting of literacy and English language acquisition integrated with civics education that includes instruction of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. In accordance with the

Act, focus will be placed on engagement of adult education and literacy providers, employers, and occupational trainers to assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills essential for employment and self-sufficiency. The IELCE programs will be combined with integrated education and training (IET) as students demonstrate readiness to participate in the workforce training portion. The training and combined education will be concurrent and contextualized instruction in a high demand industry or career cluster. Each program designed under Section 243 of Title II must: 1. prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and 2. integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

2. Describe How the State Will Fund, in Accordance with the Requirements of Title II, Subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Services and How the Funds Will Be Used for Those Services.

Funding for this program is at the minimum level of \$60,000 statewide. Funding may be offered to program(s) most likely to be successful through community support, business collaboration, and partnerships with Adult Education as determined by their application.

Each application will be reviewed for the ability to provide the necessary English literacy acquisition education and training components and the applicants past service to English Language Learners (ELL) populations. Their partnership with Workforce Services and other local partnerships will offer the potential for a successful job placement or entry into postsecondary education or skills training.

Services for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs will be developed and implemented as guidance from OCTAE is disseminated during the 2016–17 grant year and technical assistance is offered.

e. State Leadership

1. Describe How the State Will Use the Funds to Carry Out the Required State Leadership Activities Under Section 223 of WIOA.

In a small populated state such as Wyoming, award requirements allow for 82.5 percent for instructional usage and \$85,000 for administrative expense usage, leaving approximately 6.8 percent for completing the “Required” State Leadership activities. Wyoming will focus on the “Required” activities at the State level. These activities described under WIOA Title II include:

(a) ACTIVITIES.—

(1) REQUIRED.—Each eligible agency shall use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for the following adult education and literacy activities to develop or enhance the adult education system of the State or outlying area:

(A) The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, to implement the strategy identified in the unified State plan under section 102 of the combined State plan under section 103, including

the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

(B) The establishment or operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b), including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

(C) The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title, including— (i) the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training; (ii) the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and (iii) assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

(D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

State Leadership funds provided under section 223 will primarily cover the cost of the required activities described above. Annual Fall conference will be utilized to offer professional development including the alignment of Adult Education with other core programs and one-stop partners, professional development programs in academic areas, and disseminating instructional and programmatic best practices. In addition, leadership funds will be used for on-site monitoring of programs. Technical assistance (TA) is part of all monitoring visits to address current questions and challenges to meeting performance. If trends are identified in multiple programs, additional training is planned and made available to all programs. In addition to this TA, the three (3) areas identified in section C above will be addressed. Webinars, trainings, and dissemination of materials, links, and PD opportunities will be covered in our new monthly PD newsletter. Professional development activities will include emphasis on evidence-based reading instruction, research-based instructional strategies, effective data quality collection, integrated education and training, use of technology in the classroom, serving students with disabilities, career pathways implementation, instruction in numeracy, writing, English instruction and language acquisition, distance learning, participatory learning, content standards, embedding social capital skills (aka employability skills) into classroom management and instruction, and content standards. Transition to postsecondary education and training programs will be a collaborative effort among the core partners and community partners.

COLLABORATION.—In carrying out this section, eligible agencies shall collaborate where possible, and non-duplication of effort among partners will be a priority in order to maximize the impact of the activities above.

2. Describe How the State Will Use the Funds to Carry Out Permissible State Leadership Activities Under Section 223 of WIOA, if Applicable.

With limited funding to carry out the required activities, the Wyoming Adult Education program has created a three-tier professional development plan to share expenses and responsibilities with local programs. This allows a local Adult Education program to utilize funds awarded to the program to purchase professional development services or “permissible activities.” The state will work closely with local providers to coordinate these efforts and evaluate these activities.

In the three-tiered PD plan there is an explanation of types of PD for which the State will be responsible, what areas the state and local programs may share the cost of PD, and which elements the local programs are responsible to provide.

A professional development newsletter is being created to share opportunities for instructors to take advantage of self-study site, community of practice meetings on a variety of subjects, college courses available, and conferences offering PD which meet the PD goals of the program or the instructors’ individual PD plan.

When funding is available, special projects will be funded to pilot or address the activities listed in (A)-(M) below that are applicable to Wyoming’s programs. As guidance or training is provided by OCTAE, this information will be shared with local program directors via face-to-face meetings or electronically through webinars and emails.

A yearly rotational schedule will be developed in order to develop, promote and implement the permissible activities. Webinars, taskforces and blogs will be used to disseminate information.

(2) PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES.—Each eligible agency may use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for 1 or more of the following adult education and literacy activities:(A) The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.(B) The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.(C) Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults.(D) Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways. H. R. 803—192(E) The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title and in measuring the progress of those programs in achieving such objectives, including meeting the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3).(F) The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult education to postsecondary education, including linkages with postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education.(G) Integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers.(H) Activities to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities.(I) Identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning rigorous content standards that—(i) specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition; and(ii) take into consideration the following:(I) State adopted academic standards.(II) The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State or outlying area.(III) The primary indicators of performance described in section 116.(IV) Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State or outlying area.(V) Where appropriate,

the content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State or outlying area.(J) Developing and piloting of strategies for improving teacher quality and retention.(K) The development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners, which may include new and promising assessment tools and strategies that are based on scientifically valid research, where appropriate, and identify the needs and capture the gains of such students at the lowest achievement levels.(L) Outreach to instructors, students, and employers.(M) Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

f. Assessing Quality

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

Assessment of core program

Adult Education program quality is being viewed with two lenses. The first focuses on the elements of a quality program that lead to student outcomes. Second focuses on the delivery of instructional services to students, from recruitment and transition to postsecondary education, to training or employment.

Standards and their indicators identify best practices for designing and managing an Adult Education program. Best practices are a combination of applied research findings, evidence-based practices, and professional wisdom. The quality of a program may be seen in the adoption and implementation of best practices that lead to the consistent delivery of high-quality services.

Standards of quality the Wyoming Community College Commission will use are:

1. Program design and leadership
2. Capacity and sustainability
3. Learner Start Smart course, intake, and enrollment
4. Assessments and meeting negotiated targets
5. Goals and Career Pathways
6. Learner support and retention
7. Special learning needs and barriers to learning
8. Curriculum – contextualized and integrated
9. Instruction aligned to College and Career Readiness Standards

10. Learner records, data quality, and data collection
11. Transition services
12. Teacher quality and professional development
13. Teacher observation utilizing Standards In Action and the Wyoming rubric.
14. Interactive partnerships with community and core partners (Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Services programs)

Wyoming Community College Commission state leadership activities will offer high-quality professional development programs to improve instruction aligned with local required adult education and family literacy activities. All Adult Education program staff will be required to participate in 15 hours of professional development each year. This requirement includes 80 percent of the instructional staff attending the State-sponsored Fall Institute or other targeted institutes designed to improve performance. Every program must have staff members who are responsible for data entry attend data training. Training must be provided to volunteers or paid personnel for subject areas they are assisting with under the supervision of an instructor.

Instruction in the essential components of reading including text complexity, evidence of reading and writing in complex text, and use of non-fiction texts to increase knowledge is a priority for Adult Education providers. These are predictors of success in postsecondary education, training programs, and the workforce. Instruction in the rigors of mathematical concepts, reasoning, problem solving, and strategic use of tools/equations to apply math in daily life and on the job is also offered. This instruction also pertains to the specific needs of adult learners.

Digital literacy and the use of technology will be integrated into classroom instruction, in professional development, and in relevant online forums. The State will disseminate information regarding models and promising practices related to the digital literacy needs of students and staff.

Annual Adult Education program monitoring will include desktop reviews and site visits to ensure effectiveness in program improvement goals and the program's progress towards reaching negotiated state performance targets. Career Pathway plans will be used to guide the development of partnerships with core community partners in the service area. The plan will establish an integrated workflow among the partners.

Ongoing data analysis will be used for evidence of program quality. Monthly data reports including self-evaluations of pretest to post-test gains, retention, pathways activities, and exit outcomes will be sent to the State by each local provider. Quarterly narrative reports will describe successes and challenges of the local program, support or barriers for performance, and opportunities to request technical assistance. The State also will review data for trends in problem areas to target state leadership training. All programs will continue to have data quality and analysis training to strengthen their programs from the state and the data management system NexGEN by LiteracyPro.

Providers must supply performance measures of academic gain and outcomes each year. All providers not meeting end-of-year performance measures will be required to create a corrective action plan and will be given technical assistance. If low performance continues for a second year, the provider will be in jeopardy of losing funds in subsequent years. When funds are not awarded to a local Adult Education provider, the Wyoming Community College Commission will release a request for proposals to secure a new provider.

The State will monitor student data to identify patterns on student transition to postsecondary education, employment, and credentials attainment. Data workshops or online training on data analysis, data disaggregation, and data quality will be held at least semi-annually.

Assessment of Quality Professional Development Wyoming Community College Commission –Adult Education state office staff or appointed designee will assess the quality of its professional development designed to improve:

1. Instruction in the essential components of reading instruction,
2. Instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners,
3. Instruction provided by volunteers or paid personnel, and
4. Dissemination of information about models and promising practices

To inform our assessment of the quality of professional development we turned to NCSALL's research report "How Teachers Change: A Study of Professional Development in Adult Education" (2003) which gives four areas to consider in assessing the quality of professional development. Wyoming will utilize these in assessing our professional development.

1. The content has to be relevant to the short and long term stated goals of the program. It must include well defined objectives.
2. The content and processes have to be student outcomes focused (student learning at the center). The content must deepen and broaden the teachers' knowledge and skills in the subject/topic area. It must also demonstrate varied and effective styles of pedagogy and include summative and formative assessment to promote understanding.
3. The process has to be based on evidence for continuous improvement and is best when offered by subject matter experts with a thorough and up-to-date understanding of the content themselves.
4. The process has to have a maintenance infra-structure that incorporates strategies for part-time staff and addresses staff turnover.

Paper/pencil or online surveys will be used in the evaluation process. Any surveys conducted by the presenter/trainer will also be collected and reviewed for immediate feedback from the training recipients. In addition, an analysis of student data will be used to determine if the training had an impact on student outcomes and retention.

Assessment of Career Pathways

The Career Pathways plan describes partnerships with local One-Stop program partners within each service area. Written agreements will include responsibilities and expectations of each partner, resources contributed to support the partnership, and processes to avoid duplication of services.

The eleven components of the Career Pathways plan are:

1. Partnerships and alignment, which clarify roles, responsibilities, partner engagement and contributions, funding needs and resources, and labor market information.
2. Promotion and creation of Career Pathways culture and environment – aligning policies, and programs to address employment needs.
3. Individual student education and career plans.

4. Ongoing assessment.
5. Career advising and counseling.
6. Designing instructional and training services, including contextualized participatory learning.
7. Wrap-around support services that reduce barrier and increases student persistence.
8. Student data management, including intake through final performance measurement.
9. Annual monitoring, including self assessment and state monitoring.
10. Professional development for all Adult Education staff and cross training of WIOA core partner staff.
11. Educational programming provided

Plans and improvement goals will be reviewed at the beginning of the program year. Quarterly reports on goal achievement will be monitored. End-of-year goals performance will be assessed.

State and local Adult Education providers will work with One-Stop partners to provide students access to education and training services. Each local plan will include a description of transition support services and available scholarships open to Adult Education students. The WIOA Career Pathway template may be found at this link: <http://www.communitycolleges.wy.eud/grant-opportunities.aspx>.

Assessment through trend reporting

Program report cards will provide local Adult Education providers with results of the current year and two previous years. This will include average hours, enrollment, educational functional level gain, and transition to postsecondary or training.

Certifications

States must provide written and signed certifications that

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan.
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program.
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan.
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law.

5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan.
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan.
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan.
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by Page 232 section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any

person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization

Full Name of Authorized Representative:

Title of Authorized Representative:

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions).
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA.
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA.
4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities;
5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations Page 233 that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and
6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.
7. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (gepa)

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the instructions posted at <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc>.

g. Adult Education and Literacy Program Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	PY 2016 Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated Level	PY 2017 Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)				
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)				
Credential Attainment Rate				
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. Input Provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, Including Input and Recommendations on the Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, Recommendations from the Council's Report, the Review and Analysis of Consumer Satisfaction, and Other Council Reports That May Have Been Developed as Part of the Council's Functions;

All information for the entire Section "a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council" and all and sub-headings is located in section 3 (the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations).

2. The Designated State Unit's Response to the Council's Input and Recommendations; and

3. The Designated State Unit's Explanations for Rejecting Any of the Council's Input or Recommendations.

b. Request for Waiver of Statewideness

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. A Local Public Agency Will Provide the Non-federal Share of Costs Associated with the Services to Be Provided in Accordance with the Waiver Request;

All information for section "b. Request for Waiver of Statewideness" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading 3 – All State plan requirements will apply.

2. The Designated State Unit Will Approve Each Proposed Service Before it is Put into Effect; and

All information for section "b. Request for Waiver of Statewideness" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading 3 – All State plan requirements will apply.

3. All State Plan Requirements Will Apply

This agency has not requested a waiver of statewideness.

c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System.

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. Federal, State, and Local Agencies and Programs;

All information for section "c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading "5. State use contracting programs."

Availability and Utilization of Assistive Technology

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) makes assistive technology available to our Vocational Rehabilitation clients during each stage of the rehabilitation process. The primary provider of assistive technology in Wyoming is the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities. This provider provides AT assessments for DVR applications and clients and DVR works with vendors who are close in proximity with clients to provide the AT that is needed. Many of the offices in the Department of Workforce Services have resource rooms available and have computers with assistive devices for individuals with disabilities.

2. State Programs Carried Out Under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;

All information for section "c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading "5. State use contracting programs."

3. Programs Carried Out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture;

All information for section "c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading "5. State use contracting programs."

4. Noneducational Agencies Serving Out-of-school Youth; and

The Division's transition consultants are working to identify all youth that may qualify for our services. They are reaching out to the local school districts, the Wyoming Boys' and Girls' School, juvenile corrections, and other entities, including mental health agencies, that work with youth. The purpose of their outreach is to provide information to those individuals that may be eligible, to let them know that the Division may be able to help them secure training and employment. The Employment First consultant for the Division is also providing the same information to businesses that may come in contact with these individuals as well.

5. State Use Contracting Programs.

Shoshone Tribal Business Council

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Eastern Shoshone Tribal Business Council have a written memorandum of understanding concerning rehabilitation services for Native Americans. The Eastern Shoshone Red Feathered Eagle Vocational Rehabilitation Program lost support of its tribal council and terminated services to individuals with disabilities on the Wind River Reservation. The State Vocational Rehabilitation Program will assume responsibility for supporting eligible individuals from the reservation.

Northern Arapaho Business Council

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Northern Arapaho Tribal Council have a written memorandum of understanding in place concerning rehabilitation services for Native Americans. Division staff will provide educational/training support to staff of the Northern Arapaho Vocational Rehabilitation Program. The Northern Arapaho staff will participate on the State Independent Living Council and in Division staff-training events.

Business Enterprise Program

This program is responsible for administering vending machine placement and services in State buildings and small businesses that may operate in State buildings. The program is a part of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and has an assigned program consultant who manages and oversees the program. This necessitates close working relationships with vending service providers, building administrators, job coaches, community rehabilitation programs, and other government agencies.

The main objective of the Business Enterprise Program is to help individuals with disabilities plan and set up small businesses. Other entities are often involved in this process, including the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Small Business Development Centers, the Wyoming Women's Business Center, the Wyoming Business Council, Social Security, private businesses, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, and the Rocky Mountain Inventors and Entrepreneurs' Congress.

Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services Program

The Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services Program coordinates and cooperates with numerous Federal, State, and local agencies and programs to provide services to people with communication impairments.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Wyoming Legislature gave the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation administrative authority over the Wyoming Telecommunication Relay Service, also known as Wyoming Relay. The legislation established a special fee as the method of funding. The Division, through a competitive bid process, awarded a contract to a telecommunication service provider and oversees that contract. The Division also works cooperatively with the Federal Communications Commission, the Wyoming Public Service Commission, local exchange carriers, and radio common carriers to ensure that Wyoming Relay provides quality telecommunications relay service for conversations between people who use text telephones or other specialized telecommunications equipment and people who use the standard telephone network. Wyoming Relay meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional Federal and State standards.

The legislation establishing Wyoming Relay also created a committee on telecommunications services for the communications impaired. The seven members of the committee are appointed by the Governor. The Division collaborates with this consumer-based committee to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of current services, to determine the need for new services, to develop marketing and outreach plans, to establish the rate of the special fee, and to determine equipment needs for the telecommunications equipment distribution program.

Wyoming Relay works cooperatively with Vocational Rehabilitation Division staff, phone companies, independent living centers, educational outreach consultants, special education teachers, consumer groups, assistive technology service providers, public health

agencies, and senior citizen centers to provide information and training on obtaining and using specialized telecommunications equipment, including text telephones, amplified telephones, and telephone signaling devices for consumers with communication impairments. The training includes how to find and use interpreters.

This training is provided to individuals; students; businesses; organizations; and city, county, State, and Federal agencies. Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services also has developed a specialized training program and works cooperatively with local and state law enforcement agencies. Public safety dispatchers are trained to ensure 911 emergency access for callers using text telephones and captioned telephones.

Additionally, all peace officers who attend the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy receive training to ensure that they are providing accessible services to individuals with communication impairments.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works with the Wyoming Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to ensure that all known interpreters in the state receive a form jointly developed by the Division and Registry that serves as a tool for assessing the skill level of interpreters. The Division collects the completed forms from interpreters, verifies interpreters' credentials, and then compiles information interpreters choose to make public on a list of interpreters. This list is distributed to the general public, individuals, businesses, organizations, and governmental agencies.

A Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services consultant works with hearing-impaired students at the request of students, parents, school personnel, Wyoming Department of Education outreach consultants, or Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors.

Division of Workers' Compensation

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to have an agreement with the Workers' Compensation Division, which also is part of the Department of Workforce Services but not a Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) "partner." The purpose of the agreement is to clarify procedures and responsibilities when an injured worker applies for the vocational rehabilitation option. (Refer to Wyoming Statutes, 27-14-408.) A handbook for clients explaining the divisions' processes is distributed to staffs of both agencies. A communication system to resolve client issues has been established and will continue.

Cooperation in training activities

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation routinely collaborates with other organizations to provide training opportunities for Division staff, as well as for staff of other agencies. The following is a partial list of collaborating organizations:

- University of Wyoming
- Wyoming Institute for Disabilities
- Wyoming Department of Education
- Wyoming Department of Health

- Wyoming Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Small Business Development Centers
- Wyoming Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery
- Community rehabilitation programs statewide
- Centers for Independent Living
- Protection and Advocacy, the Client Assistance Program
- Eastern Wyoming College
- Casper College
- Western Wyoming Community College
- Wyoming Work Incentives, Planning and Assistance
- National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
- State of Wyoming, Department of Administration and Information
- Department of Workforce Services partners
- Laramie County Community College
- Assumption College
- Utah State University
- Sheridan (Wyo.) College
- Wyoming parent training and information centers

d. Coordination with Education Officials

1. Dsu's Plans

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to support State and local education agencies by being involved in community transition teams and related transition programs designed to address the needs of students who may become eligible for Division services. Transition training is conducted at the local, regional, and statewide levels.

The Division plans to continue its support of training programs designed to ensure successful transition through partnerships with State and local education agencies and other community based adult services. The Division anticipates state and local education agencies will see the benefit of participating in transition-focused partnerships to achieve compliance with new State and Federal regulations. To assist with this, the Division has two transition consultants who travel to all 48 state and local education agencies to provide education and consultation services.

The transition consultants participate in a transition-focused community of practice assembled by the University of Wyoming for the purpose of developing education policy recommendations and guidance for best practices to ensure successful transitions for Wyoming students. The transition consultant has provided trainings for students and parents in partnership with the Wyoming Parent Information Center. Specific training about Division of Vocational Rehabilitation transition services has been provided to teachers and parents of students who are hearing impaired. Similar training also has been provided to the Wyoming Independent Living (WIL) organization. Plans are being developed for additional training in the spring of 2016.

2. Information on the Formal Interagency Agreement with the State Educational Agency with Respect To:

A. Consultation and Technical Assistance to Assist Educational Agencies in Planning for the Transition of Students with Disabilities from School to Post-school Activities, Including Vocational Services;

All information for section "2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:" and all related sub-headings is located in sub-heading "D. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services".

B. Transition Planning by Personnel of the Designated State Agency and Educational Agency That Facilitates the Development and Implementation of Their Individualized Education Programs;

All information for section "2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:" and all related sub-headings is located in sub-heading "D. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services".

C. Roles and Responsibilities, Including Financial Responsibilities, of Each Agency, Including Provisions for Determining State Lead Agencies and Qualified Personnel Responsible for Transition Services;

All information for section "2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:" and all related sub-headings is located in sub-heading "D. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services".

D. Procedures for Outreach to and Identification of Students with Disabilities Who Need Transition Services.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation currently has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Wyoming Department of Education. The purpose is to outline a collaborative framework that includes responsibilities of each agency in coordinating State and local

services and resources, as outlined in State and Federal regulations and rule as they apply to students with disabilities in transition from receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services. Definitions; a. Student with a disability; age 16 to 21 and is eligible for and receiving special education or related services. b. Youth with Disability, not younger than 14 or older than 24 years of age and is not attending any school.

Provisions of the MOU include:

1. Each agency will invite the other to participate in training related to secondary transition, as appropriate.
2. Each shall designate a contact person to coordinate communication.
3. Each will be responsible for staff salaries and travel costs associated with executing the MOU. Other costs associated with training and technical assistance will be predetermined and agreed to in writing prior to the actual training event.
4. The parties mutually agree to resolve disputes in a non-adversarial fashion by meeting to confer and discuss any issues that may arise. Issues will be brought immediately to the attention of agency personnel so issues can be resolved as expeditiously and informally as possible and at the lowest appropriate level. If agency personnel cannot resolve a dispute, it will be referred to the Director of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Superintendent of Public Instruction for resolution.
5. Both agencies will encourage local educational agencies and regional vocational rehabilitation offices to participate in local activities that create opportunities for students with disabilities to receive information on vocational rehabilitation services, eligibility, and application procedures. These outreach activities may include, but are not limited to, parent/teacher conferences, career fairs or special projects targeted toward groups of students with disabilities who have been traditionally underserved through vocational/transition services. These include students at risk of dropping out, students receiving services through 504 plans or groups of students identified as underserved through the annual analysis of statewide data.

The Wyoming Department of Education shall:

1. Designate highly qualified educational personnel to be responsible for technical assistance, consultations, and the development of statewide program strategies and procedures applicable for youth with disabilities.
2. Maintain membership/educational representation on the State Rehabilitation Council and other related councils, task forces, and committees.
3. Ensure local educational agencies implement the educational standards for Wyoming schools serving children with disabilities for transition services as specified by the Individuals with Disabilities Act. Ensure transition services are based on a student's individual educational needs as documented in the student's individual education program.
4. Establish appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals in training or education, employment, and independent living skills, and update annually.

5. Plan and conduct age-appropriate vocational and/or transition assessments and, if appropriate, a functional vocational assessment no later than the year in which the student turns 16.
6. Provide transition services in the individual education program that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals.
7. Provide a course of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals.
8. Provide instruction and related services that support a student's post-school goals and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills.
9. Develop community and work experiences that provide opportunities for students to participate in skills development in community settings.
10. Provide specific employment skills development through career and occupational skills training, employability skills development, work behaviors, and self-management skills acquisition, and support post-school adult living objectives.
11. Establish linkages and facilitate communication with family, school, community agencies, and employers.
12. Develop and implement a longitudinal tracking system for students with disabilities after k-12 departure.
13. Assure that local education agencies obtain permission to invite outside service agencies and invite prior to the individual education program meeting at which transition services will be addressed.

Responsibilities of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation include:

1. Division transition consultants shall coordinate with the Department of Education, Special Programs Division and local education agencies to develop and provide a system for seamless transition from school to work/training for students with disabilities.
2. Be responsible for the provision of technical assistance, consultations, and the development of statewide program strategies and procedures applicable to youth with disabilities.
3. Provide technical assistance to Department of Education personnel through formal and informal training, joint problem-solving, and exchange of information on policies and procedures.
4. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation transition consultants will participate in the annual data analysis which is performed each fall.
5. Division transition consultants shall meet with local education agency special education directors, teachers, guidance counselors, and community service representatives to provide technical assistance and training about Division programs, policies and regulations as they apply to student transitions.

6. Assign vocational rehabilitation counseling personnel to work with educational agencies in formalizing collaborative efforts on student planning, referral development, and tracking.
7. Make available relevant data about eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services and tracking information about employment outcomes for students and youth with disabilities. Review agency data collection procedures to improve and track vocational rehabilitation services and employment outcomes.
8. Division counselors shall assist local education agencies in planning for transitions of students with disabilities from school to post-school careers and life. Division counselors shall act as consultants for students, parents, and the local education agencies during IEP/transition meetings scheduled prior to eligibility determination by DVR. When requested by the LEA, DVR shall ensure that DVR counselors/representatives participate in the evaluation process of students who have applied for or otherwise requested DVR services in the development of the IEP or 504 plan of eligible students.
9. The Division shall provide the Wyoming Department of Education with data about students eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, and tracking information about employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. This data will be exclusive of specific student identifiable information.
10. The Division will assign vocational rehabilitation counselors to serve as liaisons to local educational agencies and to formalize a collaborative approach to student planning, referral development, and tracking. The aim is to facilitate the development of appropriate individual plans for employment for eligible students prior to the students leaving high school.
11. When required as part of a student's individual plan for employment, the Division shall negotiate with local education agencies to purchase items of assistive technology from such local agencies pursuant to their authority under Wyo. Stat. §21-3-111 (a) (ii) and (xv).
12. The Division shall counsel former students who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, and who are still eligible for free appropriate public education, to re-enroll in school for further study and training to enhance their prospects for employment. Such former students as shall be eligible for services customarily provided by the Division to adults over age 21.
13. Whenever possible, the Division shall coordinate with local education agencies to provide vocational services (i.e., vocational assessments, career exploration, job shadowing, vocational guidance and rehabilitation counseling, and work experience) for students eligible for Division services. The Division and such local agencies may negotiate the costs of vocationally related services prior to expenditures.
14. Identification of specific student groups with disabilities and in need of transition services will be based on the annual statewide data analysis. This analysis examines and targets areas of critical need, including groups of youth with disabilities who have been identified as underserved by both agencies. Outreach activities will be designed and refined annually based in part on this analysis.
15. Redesign the Division brochure, "Transition Your Abilities," to better communicate the purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, its eligibility requirements, application procedures, and scope of services, and to disseminate the brochure to stakeholders. The

Division also will develop technical assistance presentations targeted to core stakeholders that address vocational rehabilitation services and requirements. Such stakeholders are students, parents, schools, and communities. Presentation venues could include career exploration days in schools, Wyoming's Mega Conference on Disabilities, and Department of Education conferences targeting special educators.

16. The Division may be responsible for some vocational services that occur outside the school environment and are designed to prepare the student for post-secondary training or work. The Division is not responsible for services not directly agreed upon during the development of the student's individual education program and is not included as a service on the student's individual plan for employment.

In addition to the State-level memorandum of understanding, cooperation between the Division and local education agencies ensures that a transition team is established to develop and accomplish objectives and long-term goals. These teams meet for individual education program development and scheduled planning sessions. The planning sessions, which include parents and consumers, determine the transition schedule from the school system to vocational rehabilitation to facilitate the completion of the individual education program and in order to develop the individual plan for employment of an eligible transition-age youth prior to that individual leaving the school setting. This process also includes students with disabilities who are not receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Community team members participating in the planning sessions may include youth case managers from WIA, representatives from an IL Agency, representatives from higher education or vocational programs, community rehabilitation service providers, and advocates. With a comprehensive transition team, the referral process is enhanced, outreach is improved, roles are more clearly defined, and transition services are coordinated. Assessments, consultations, and technical assistance also are provided to local education agencies and students. Individual meetings and community planning sessions allow The Division to help complete individual plans for employment for each student with a disability who is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services before the student leaves the school setting.

The Division works with local education agencies to improve the referral process of students who have an individual education program and in identifying the 504 students. Such local agencies are encouraged to invite the Division to individual education program meetings as soon as transition planning occurs, but no later than the last individual education program before the student graduates or reaches the age of 21. As the transition consultant is able, efforts will continue to be made to improve the referral process in all of the 48 local education agencies in Wyoming.

The Division has established a two transition consultant positions. The consultants coordinates with local, State and Federal education officials to improve the process for students in transition. The transition consultants is are a resource on issues related to transitions, provides training to staff, and provides a consistent statewide message from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to the local education agencies. The transition consultants are actively educating Division, as well as education staff, on Pre-Employment Transition Services. Their goal is to increase referrals to better utilize the services that fall in this area and to target students that would benefit from worker with the Division. The consultants are working on developing relationships, handouts and resource guides, trainings and any other needed service to educate people of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Services for the visually impaired

Collaboration with Wyoming Education Department's Services for the Visually Impaired (SVI) and special education assists students and adults with disabilities in several ways. For example, the Montgomery Trust (a private trust specifically earmarked for the visually impaired) can provide assistive technology equipment to both visually impaired young people and adults. Also DVR collaborates with SVI, WIL, Wyoming Services for Independent Living (WSIL), and Centrum for Disability Services in providing services to clients.

The Division also has a memorandum of understanding with Wyoming institutions of higher education. The purpose of this MOU is to guide the planning and delivery of support services to individuals with disabilities who are clients of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and are students enrolled at Wyoming institutions of higher education so there is a seamless delivery system for overlapping services. These education institutions include the University of Wyoming and Wyoming's seven community colleges.

Provisions of the MOU include:

1. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and institutions of higher education are not required to alter their policies, which are different from each other, for providing services or support.
2. These education institutions are required to provide services and accommodations to Division clients only to the same extent as they are provided to other students with disabilities.
3. The Division is not prohibited from contracting with individual institutions of higher education to provide services or support for Division clients beyond those required to assure equal access to educational opportunities.
4. Information exchange and joint training.
5. Referral procedures.
6. The institutions of higher education will not require students with disabilities to apply for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation funding before providing services or support. Nor will they deny or delay the provision of services or support while the Division is determining the student's eligibility for services.
7. In situations where a referral has been made to an institution of higher education for services, the appropriate institution staff may be involved in developing individual plans for employment.
8. The Division counselor and higher education staff will respect an individual's right and responsibility to fully participate in all decisions regarding his or her vocational future.
9. Definition of reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aids.

10. Guidelines for the provision of auxiliary aids. Among other things, funding sources for auxiliary aids will be determined on an individual, case-by-case basis depending on the setting and the individual's status as a student or Division client. In the case of equipment, ownership will be determined.
11. Additional guidelines for the provision of interpreter services.
12. Guidelines for the provision of different types of real-time captioning services.

E. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

Community rehabilitation program

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The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation does not maintain cooperative agreements with private, non-profit organizations. The Division maintains fee-for-service relationships with all community rehabilitation programs to provide job development and job-coaching services. The fees are negotiated on a location-by-location basis, keeping in mind rates being paid elsewhere in the state. Due to Wyoming's rural character, finding service providers can be challenging.

Description of the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

In Wyoming, the DVR is required to write a contract with any vendors involving \$5,000 or more. The process is dictated by the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information.

A draft request for proposal, including a list of potential proposers, is developed by the Division. The RFP must be in a format outlined by the Wyoming Attorney General, who then must review and approve it. The RFP is then submitted to the Purchasing Division of the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information, which attaches all the required legal information, makes arrangements for announcing the request for proposals in newspapers statewide, and receives sealed bids. The bids are scored by Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff, and the Purchasing Division notifies both successful and unsuccessful bidders.

Contracts are negotiated by Division staff and the proposer based on a set of requirements. The Wyoming Attorney General then reviews and approves the contract before it is signed by the parties.

Utilization, findings, and capacity of community rehabilitation programs

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation makes extensive use of community rehabilitation programs, primarily to provide supported employment and related services. All regions of the state continue to be served to some degree by community rehabilitation programs operating under the state's developmental disabilities and behavioral health programs, or by independent organizations. Coverage is comprehensive for individuals with developmental disabilities, although a few agencies affiliated with the developmental disability system still do not provide extensively supported employment opportunities. These gaps have been, to a degree, filled by independent non-profit or for-profit agencies and freelance job coaches.

Historically, the Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has made effective use of community rehabilitation programs in serving clients with the most significant disabilities. Over the past several years, significant progress has been made in encouraging mental health centers and other providers to become more involved in providing supported employment services.

Progress rarely happens in a straight line, however. In some instances, promising efforts at collaborations with service providers have faltered for reasons that may or may not be under the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's control. In some cases, local staffs have succeeded in finding or developing alternative resources for supported employment services.

The demonstrated effectiveness of supported employment services in providing job opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities argues for persistence in these efforts. With some mental health centers in particular, developing collaborative supported employment programs is in the long-term interests of people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Policies for the use of community rehabilitation programs

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's use of community rehabilitation programs continues to reflect a commitment to integrated, community-based employment.

The Division has issued a policy to the effect that such programs must be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, unless the organization has been in existence for less than 12 months, or has been providing services to clients for less than that time.

The Division also maintains a policy that mental health centers from which the Division purchases services must be certified by the Wyoming Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health.

F. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to advance opportunities for Wyoming citizens with disabilities so they can be employed and independent in the least restrictive and most integrated environments possible. To

this end, the Division has established and maintained strong working relationships with State agencies and other appropriate entities to help provide supported employment services throughout Wyoming.

The Division does not have any formal agreements with providers of supported employment services and does not anticipate entering into any such agreements in the near future. The Division provides services on a client-by-client basis and pays an appropriate market rate for the services provided.

The goal of Wyoming's supported employment program is to increase community integration, individual independence, and productivity of persons with the most significant disabilities. In support of this goal, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will:

- Increase training so staff can better identify clients with the most significant disabilities and their needs for supported employment services.
- Continue cooperative efforts with school districts and other rehabilitation entities to enhance supported employment programs statewide including the use of Transition Consultants and Independent Living Specialists.
- Encourage dedicated funding for long-term support needed by supported employment clients. This will include networking with the Division of Behavioral Health, Regional Service Providers in Wyoming, mental health centers, the Wyoming Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, State and local education programs, Social Security employment incentive including Ticket To Work programs, training programs under WIOA, and private businesses. There are still geographic, programmatic, and disability-related gaps in the capacities of community rehabilitation programs to provide the array of services the Division needs for clients with the most significant disabilities. These gaps include: •Although there has been progress, there are substantial gaps in services to persons with acquired brain injuries. •State-of-the-art employment services for persons with severe and persistent mental illnesses are more widely available now than at the time of previous needs assessments, but such services still are not available to all communities. •The potential for community rehabilitation programs to play a more substantial role in preparing students with disabilities for the transition from school to employment has not been fully explored.

G. Coordination with Employers

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

i. Vr Services; and

The Wyoming Employment First Task Force established by the State Legislature in 2014 (Statute HEA 0053) has developed a Strategic Plan that includes FY 2016, 2017 and 2018. The task force has developed a dash board that includes information and statistics from Department of Workforce Services, Behavioral Health Division, Wyoming Department of Education, Department of Family Services and Mental Health. The Employment First Consultant is responsible for the establishment of community employer groups that have hired

individuals with disabilities. The purpose of these groups is to educate other employers on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.

The Division is part of a taskforce of agencies participating in an Employment First Initiative. The goal is to promote employment as the first option for significantly disabled individuals, versus options like sheltered work settings or day habilitation programs. The initiative aims to make disability employment part of the state workforce development strategy, find and support businesses that employ people with disabilities, ensure the State of Wyoming becomes a model employer of people with disabilities, prepare youth with disabilities for careers that use their potential and provide employers with skilled workers, and utilize existing limited resources to advance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The Division hired a program consultant who focuses on employer relations. The consultant contacts businesses to provide information about the Division and its services, ascertains the potential for future job placements, and encourages businesses to participate in employer groups being set up around the state. Such groups will provide avenues for businesses to share their successes and challenges in hiring disabled individuals.

The Division also has its counselors and regional supervisors out in the community working with local employers to educate them about vocational rehabilitation services, the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities, and establishing sites for employment opportunities and or trail work experiences. The Division makes an effort to partner with other organizations when possible to reach out to employers. Some of these organizations are the Uinta County Business Leadership Network, Wyoming Independent Living, and various Community Rehabilitation Programs. In most circumstances, the Division provides information to employers on a one-on-one basis, but will present information at professional conferences, chamber events, and other community gatherings where staff are invited to participate.

ii. Transition Services, Including Pre-employment Transition Services, for Students and Youth with Disabilities.

The Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) reclassified two of its most experienced counselors to work as Transition Consultants. In this role, they communicate with school counselors in every school district throughout the state to offer DVR services and develop work experiences for students and youth with disabilities.

The two Transition Consultants work with the State Department of Education, local school districts, and Division staff, providing information about Division services and helping Division staff and eligible students with disabilities transitions from school to the world of work. The consultants also help employer groups and others increase opportunities for work experiences and jobs for youth with disabilities. The transition consultants are coordinating with education officials to explore at the possibility of starting Project Search sites in Wyoming. The transition consultants are actively educating Division, as well as education staff, on Pre-Employment Transition Services. Their goal is to increase referrals to better utilize the services that fall in this area and to target students that would benefit from worker with the Division. The consultants are working on developing relationships, handouts and resource guides, trainings and any other needed service to educate people of Pre-Employment Transition Services.

On the local level, DVR Counselors are working in our field offices to develop job sites that can support short-term work experiences for students and youth with disabilities. Where possible, DVR is partnering with other groups and agencies. Some of these agencies include Mental Health centers, Uinta County Business Leadership Network, Wyoming Independent Living, Community Rehabilitation Programs, and the local school districts. DVR is beginning to work on reaching out to Institutes for Higher Education and directly with employers across the state to identify additional opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. Wyoming DVR is also working with various organizations to develop youth leadership opportunities to increase self-advocacy skills.

Wyoming DVR is developing a pilot Project SEARCH program in Albany County. Project SEARCH has programs in 47 states and is highly recommended by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to help DVR agencies meet the Pre Employment Transition Service requirements found in WIOA. As such, DVR is working with the following partners from: Education: Local School District, Career Technical School, Educational Service Center; several neighboring / contiguous school districts, etc.; Community Rehabilitation Partner (provider of job coaching and job development); Developmental Disabilities Agency or Mental Health Provider (for follow along services); Local Employers

A more detailed description of Project SEARCH can be found at:

<http://www.projectsearch.us/OurPROGRAM.aspx>

H. Interagency Cooperation

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

i. The State Medicaid Plan Under Title XIX of the Social Security Act;

In 1995, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (now Behavioral Health Division) to increase collaboration between DVR and Division of Developmental Disabilities on behalf of mutually eligible clients, to increase the use of funding available to the State for the vocational rehabilitation of individuals with severe disabilities, to move individuals who are enrolled in Developmental Disabilities sponsored transitional training programs to supported employment and other suitable employment outcomes, and to expand the number of individuals with severe disabilities served by DVR. This MOU has not been updated since then. The mission of the two divisions has not changed. There is more cooperation between the two divisions to best utilize DVR funds and funds from the Medicaid waiver services to maximize their benefits to the clients and his or her ability to obtain and maintain employment.

DVR also works with the Governor's Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities. DVR maintains an active membership on this Council to provide insight into how DVR can work with these individuals as well as to learn of ways the DVR can do more. DVR staff will present and participate in trainings that the Council conducts.

ii. The State Agency Responsible for Providing Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities; and

Information for this sub-section, can be found in sub-section 1- the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

iii. The State Agency Responsible for Providing Mental Health Services

I. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

i. Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

I. Qualified Personnel Needs.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

a. The number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

All information for section "i. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading iii.

b. The number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

All information for section "i. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading iii.

c. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's comprehensive system of personnel development includes procedures and activities to ensure an adequate supply of qualified rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals. This system has four goals:

- Identify current professional staff training needs and plan for skills and knowledge development of staff one to five years from now;
- Coordinate personnel development activities with the Wyoming Department of Education as specified by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- Coordinate a means to address training needs of current staff using institutions of higher education; and
- Coordinate activities to ensure staff are adequately trained and prepared to expand and improve services to clients.

The State Rehabilitation Council has had an opportunity to review and comment on the development of plans, policies, and procedures regarding:

1. The plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel;
2. Personnel standards;
3. Staff development; and
4. Personnel to address individual communication needs.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains a system for collecting and analyzing data on an annual basis. This includes information on personnel needs; a plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel; personnel standards; staff development; and personnel to address individual communication needs.

Information on the number, location and disability types served; number of agency personnel and levels of education; and training needed to improve skills and maintain certification levels is included in this section.

II. Personnel Development

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

a. A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

All information for section "B. Personnel Development' and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading iii.

b. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

All information for section "B. Personnel Development' and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading iii.

c. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

Wyoming currently does not have an institution of higher education that trains rehabilitation professionals. The three nearest such programs are at the University of Northern Colorado, Utah State University, and Montana State University. These programs concentrate on private and public rehabilitation respectively. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation also uses Assumption College as an optional location for distance education. All programs are certified by the Council on Rehabilitation Education.

Currently, 25 people in the Division with certified rehabilitation counselor credentials. Two counselors are working on master's degrees in rehabilitation counseling at Utah State University and one at Montana State University-Billing. Two more are attending Assumption College. Staff members monitor the training process by sending a copy of each semester's registration and grades to verify course completion.

Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
Utah State University	2	2	2	?
Assumption College	2	2	2	?
Montana State University – Billings	1	1	1	?

ii. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation recruits counselors from the University of Northern Colorado, Utah State University, Montana State University, and Assumption College whenever possible. The Division actively participates on the advisory boards of the University of Northern Colorado and Utah State University, and has worked to improve communication with both schools to announce open positions and to recruit potential counselors. The Division has been posting current vacancy notices with the three universities. This is in addition to placing ads in local and regional newspapers, with the Department of Workforce Services, and with Wyoming at Work, the state job network. The Division, in accordance with the ADA, seeks to employ and advance qualified individuals with disabilities, as well as minorities.

Periodic announcements of staff position openings are sent via e-mail from a listserv of Council of Rehabilitation Education graduate programs. The Division also maintains a listserv for smaller colleges in the area that have master's level programs in related fields.

The Division's comprehensive system of personnel development requires a counselor to have a master's degree and be eligible to sit for the certified rehabilitation counselor exam. The Division attempts to hire individuals who meet the personnel development requirement, but if that is not possible, an attempt is made to hire someone with a related bachelor's degree and two years of experience. Such a new hire is made aware that at the end of his or her one-year probationary period, he or she will be expected to attend a Council of Rehabilitation Education accredited school to receive a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. He or she will have four years to complete the degree.

The Division currently has 19 counselors who meet or exceed the personnel development requirements. Of the remaining staff who do not meet the personnel development requirements, four are currently working in a master's degree program, or classes for Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) category R and the balance are currently in a probationary period and will begin working to meet the personnel development requirements at the appropriate time.

The Division actively updates and implements a system that addresses current and projected personnel training needs. Coordination between Wyoming's personnel training needs and institutions of higher education occurs when the personnel development consultant and Division administrator participate in university program advisory meetings.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation began developing training plans in 2004, stemming from the use of the Professional Development Guide and Matrix the performance appraisal system, an annual training needs survey, and via focus groups.

In 2006, use of retention plans also was instituted. The personal development consultant tracks training needs of all employees and addresses those needs through annual in-services for both counselors and assistants. The Division also sends individuals to training sessions provided by the State of Wyoming Personnel Division and private or public vendors. The staff is also supplied information on providers' websites to assist with training needs. Training in specific areas is addressed at the annual statewide in-service, regional

in-services, on-the-job training with area consultants and training officers, and/or using a contracted vendor. The Division is exploring the possibility of delivering staff training using webcam technology and creating in-house, on-demand training.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has made a conscious effort to address retention and recruitment of staff by raising the pay for all field professional and paraprofessional staff. The Wyoming Legislature approved a pay raise for state employees effective July 1, 2011, which moved staff to 90 percent of market value.

Futures group

The “futures group” is designed for staff members who are interested in moving into new or different roles within the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and in developing the future direction of the Division. The current membership includes counselors, assistants, and program consultants. Membership is open to any permanent employee, with the approval of the supervisor and the Division administrator.

This group meets quarterly to provide input on business issues affecting the Division. They work directly with Division program managers and may attend selected management team meetings to provide input. They also identify projects that may benefit the Division. The group is or will be involved in several projects, including staff retention issues, policy development, case management computer system changes, and basic training systems.

iii. Personnel Standards

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

I. Standards That Are Consistent with Any National or State- Approved or -recognized Certification, Licensing, Registration, or Other Comparable Requirements That Apply to the Profession or Discipline in Which Such Personnel Are Providing Vr Services; and

All information for section "3. Personnel Standards" and related subheadings is located in sub-heading B.

II. The Establishment and Maintenance of Education and Experience Requirements, in Accordance with Section 101(a)(7)(b)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to Ensure That the Personnel Have a 21st Century Understanding of the Evolving Labor Force and the Needs of Individuals with Disabilities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is committed to hiring qualified rehabilitation staff beyond the current minimum standards established by the State of Wyoming Personnel Division. An individual must have a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, or

another master's degree that would allow the person to meet national certified rehabilitation counselor requirements. The Division seeks candidates with a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, counseling, social work, sociology, psychology, or other related fields.

The State of Wyoming does not have a licensing standard for rehabilitation counseling or for a rehabilitation counselor. The Division standard requires a person to have a master's degree and to be eligible to sit for the certified rehabilitation counselor exam. The State of Wyoming, Administration and Information, Human Resource Division, has set a master's degree (typically in social services) as a minimum qualification, plus up to three years of progressive work experience (typically in vocational rehabilitation) or a related bachelor's degree and four to six years of progressive work experience (typically in vocational rehabilitation.) Preference is given to someone with a certified rehabilitation counselor certification.

Because of our difficulty in recruiting and hiring qualified rehabilitation professionals, when faced with no other alternative, the Division does hire individuals with a bachelor's degree in a related field with a minimum of two years relevant work experience. (Note: This is the State of Wyoming's personnel standard). In so doing, the new hire is advised of the Division's expectations as they pertain to personnel standards and is offered the position only with the person's agreement to pursue a master's degree. If a counselor has received education funding through the agency, the individual contractually agrees to continue employment with the Division for three years after obtaining his or her master's degree. If employment is terminated before this time, repayment may be required on a pro-rated basis.

Based on standards developed through the personnel system, each staff member participates in the annual performance appraisal system that analyzes job performance and identifies training needs. The Division continues to do annual training needs assessments of all staff. The personnel development specialist tracks training needs and links individuals to appropriate training. Training needs addressed at the statewide in-service are determined by polling Division staff. Other avenues of obtaining training needs, such as focus groups, are also utilized. Counselors also have access to reference materials. These include Internet resources, reference books, and consultants. Staff also may request periodicals and other resource purchases.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will assess counselor-training needs on an individual basis to assure compliance with personnel standards. The Division's human resources development staff member maintains individual counselor records that identify training needs, training received, and anticipated target dates for completion of education programs.

Priority of training includes completion timeframes times as follows:

1. Individuals with bachelor's degree > master's rehabilitation 3 to 5 years
2. Related master's degree > certified rehabilitation counselor 1 to 3 years

Training progress for counselors is monitored and tracked annually.

The Division's personnel development system attempts to create qualified rehabilitation counselors through a distance learning grant at Utah State University and other universities. Staff members without master's degrees are required to take the Utah State University or

other distance learning programs, with financial assistance from the agency. The following table details the qualifications of current field staff:

- Of 29 counselors, 11 have certified rehabilitation counselor credentials, ten have a master's degree without such credentials, seven have a bachelor's degree, and there is one vacancy.
- All four area managers, have a master's degrees and certified rehabilitation counselor credentials.
- Of 12 administration staff, six have certified rehabilitation counselor credentials.

The comprehensive personnel development system focuses not only on creating qualified rehabilitation counselors in Wyoming but on retention as well. Training funding is used to coordinate training activities to help counselors maintain their certified rehabilitation counselor credentials and encourage other counselors who may qualify to obtain such credentials.

Of the counselors and consultants having master's degrees in areas other than vocational rehabilitation counseling, all have been advised and encouraged to acquire the designation of a certified rehabilitation counselor in accordance with methods offered by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. A record of progress toward the meeting agency standard is kept for each counselor or consultant.

iv. Staff Development.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with Section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

I. System of Staff Development

a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

II. Acquisition and Dissemination of Significant Knowledge

Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

v. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

vi. Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

J. Statewide Assessment

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

i. Provide an Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities Residing Within the State, Particularly the Vr Services Needs of Those:

I. With the Most Significant Disabilities, Including Their Need for Supported Employment Services;

II. Who Are Minorities;

III. Who Have Been Unserved or Underserved by the Vr Program;

IV. Who Have Been Served Through Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Development System; and

V. Who Are Youth with Disabilities and Students with Disabilities, Including, as Appropriate, Their Need for Pre-employment Transition Services or Other Transition Services.

ii. Identify the Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs Within the State; and

iii. Include an Assessment of the Needs of Individuals with Disabilities for Transition Career Services and Pre-employment Transition Services, and the Extent to Which Such Services Are Coordinated with Transition Services Provided Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act .

K. Annual Estimates

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:

i. The Number of Individuals in the State Who Are Eligible for Services;

ii. The Number of Eligible Individuals Who Will Receive Services Under:

I. The Vr Program;

II. The Supported Employment Program; and

III. Each Priority Category, if Under an Order of Selection;

iii. The Number of Individuals Who Are Eligible for Vr Services, but Are Not Receiving Such Services Due to an Order of Selection; and

iv. The Cost of Services for the Number of Individuals Estimated to Be Eligible for Services. if Under an Order of Selection, Identify the Cost of Services for Each Priority Category.

L. State Goals and Priorities

The designated State unit must:

i. Identify if the Goals and Priorities Were Jointly Developed

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

ii. Identify the Goals and Priorities in Carrying Out the Vr and Supported Employment Programs.

All information for section "1. State Goals and Priorities" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading C.

iii. Ensure That the Goals and Priorities Are Based on an Analysis of the Following Areas:

I. The Most Recent Comprehensive Statewide Assessment, Including Any Updates;

All information for section "1. State Goals and Priorities" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading C.

II. The State's Performance Under the Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA; and

All information for section "1. State Goals and Priorities" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading C.

III. Other Available Information on the Operation and Effectiveness of the Vr Program, Including Any Reports Received from the State Rehabilitation Council and Finding and Recommendations from Monitoring Activities Conducted Under Section 107.

Based on the 2012 statewide needs assessment, the following goals and priorities of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program are jointly developed and agreed to by the Division and the State Rehabilitation Council:

- Increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Wyoming.
- Rehabilitate at least 715 individuals with disabilities. In Federal fiscal year 2015, the Division successfully closed 662 individuals with disabilities.
- Improve outreach to and referral services from local education agencies to aid transitions from school to work through efforts of the Division transition consultant and counselors.

- Improve services to veterans with disabilities by having a program consultant act as a liaison between the Division and the Veterans Administration.
- Increase by at least five the number of clients with significant disabilities who start small businesses or are self-employed. In Federal fiscal year 2015, the Division closed 22 clients with small businesses. Clients will be assisted in setting up small businesses by using the Small Business Development Fund and other resources.
- Successfully rehabilitate in supported employment 300 or more individuals with the most significant disabilities. In Federal Fiscal 2015, 316 such people were closed successfully. Due to concerns about changes with services providers and their service focuses, the Division is concerned that it might not be able to meet the same level of employment as in previous years.
- Improve the recruitment, training, and retention of staff.

Recruitment

Increase the percentage of counselors with master's degrees to 75 percent. In Federal fiscal year 2015, 23 of 29 Division counselors had master's degrees. Increase the percentage of counselors with certified rehabilitation counselor credentials to 65 percent. In FFY 2015, 16 of 29 Division counselors had such credentials.

Training

Increase training on disability topics with relevance to staff needs and agency goals. Train staff on Federal, State, and agency policies and procedures.

Retention

Maintain a staff loss rate of 10 percent or less. In Federal fiscal year 2015, the Division lost 7 out of 67 staff members, for a 10.4 percent loss rate.

- Develop a statewide system to identify and rehabilitate "students and youth" in transition, including the use of pre-employment transition services. Increase the number of successful outcomes by closing 15 more transition students than the previous year. The Division closed 662 cases successfully in Federal fiscal year 2015.
- Increase the number of Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) clients employed successfully by 10. The Division closed 29 cases successfully in Federal fiscal year 2015.
- Increase the number of SPMI clients employed successfully by 15 over the previous year. The Division closed 252 cases successfully in Federal fiscal year 2015.
- Increase collaboration with Federal and State agencies, non-profits, and other organizations to build stronger partnerships.

The Division is working with other partners in the Unified Plan to develop opportunities to improve employment in the state. The Division is expanding employer groups throughout the state. These employer groups allow for the education of other businesses on what are the pros and cons of hiring individuals with disabilities and to dispel the myths of hiring these individuals. The division is also looking at what exists to expand the educational opportunities for people with disabilities. This may include assistance to remain in school to receive a high school diploma, work towards earning a high school equivalency, or pursuit of higher education. The Division wants to help all eligible individuals with disabilities to gain the necessary skills to be gainfully employed.

M. Order of Selection

Describe:

i. Whether the Designated State Unit Will Implement and Order of Selection. if So, Describe:

I. The Order to Be Followed in Selecting Eligible Individuals to Be Provided Vr Services.

All information for section "m. Order of Selection" and related sub-headings is located in subheading 2.

II. The Justification for the Order.

All information for section "m. Order of Selection" and related sub-headings is located in subheading 2.

III. The Service and Outcome Goals.

All information for section "m. Order of Selection" and related sub-headings is located in subheading 2.

IV. The Time Within Which These Goals May Be Achieved for Individuals in Each Priority Category Within the Order.

All information for section "m. Order of Selection" and related sub-headings is located in subheading 2.

V. How Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Are Selected for Services Before All Other Individuals with Disabilities; and

All information for section "m. Order of Selection" and related sub-headings is located in subheading 2.

- ii. If the Designated State Unit Has Elected to Serve Eligible Individuals, Regardless of Any Established Order of Selection, Who Require Specific Services or Equipment to Maintain Employment.

Wyoming is not implementing an order of selection.

N. Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds.

- i. Specify the State's Goals and Priorities for Funds Received Under Section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the Provision of Supported Employment Services.

All information for section "n. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds;" and related sub-headings is located in subheading B.

- ii. Describe the Activities to Be Conducted, with Funds Reserved Pursuant to Section 603(d), for Youth with the Most Significant Disabilities, Including:

I. The Provision of Extended Services for a Period Not to Exceed 4 Years; and

All information for section "n. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds;" and related sub-headings is located in subheading B.

II. How the State Will Leverage Other Public and Private Funds to Increase Resources for Extended Services and Expanded Supported Employment Opportunities for Youth with the Most Significant Disabilities.

Title VI, Part B funds will be used and distributed through four Division of Vocational Rehabilitation regional budgets. Local rehabilitation counselors will authorize supported employment services as needed from a variety of community rehabilitation programs and independent vendors statewide. The Division estimates that approximately \$464,768 will be spent on supported employment services in Federal fiscal year 2015. Funding sources include \$300,000 in Section 622 funds, supplemented with \$164,768 from Title I (Section 110) funds.

About 423 individuals will be served in supported employment, but only 351 will receive services from the \$300,000 Title VI, Part B grant, if available. The rest of the supported employment individuals will receive services from the Title I, Part B grant.

This estimate is for the cost of services provided directly to individuals. These services, which are purchased from vendors, include supported-employment job development and job coaching. This estimate does not include the Division's administrative costs, such as staff

salaries, staff travel, telephone, postage, rent for office space, and indirect costs. Division administrative costs are paid for with Title I, Part B (section 110) funds.

Supported employment services are available statewide, with 20 community rehabilitation programs and a number of independent vendors currently providing services.

The Division's goals for the distribution of Title VI, Part B funds can be found in Attachment 4.11(c)(1), goal numbered 6, 7, and 8.

O. State's Strategies

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

i. The Methods to Be Used to Expand and Improve Services to Individuals with Disabilities.

The Division has provided innovation and expansion funding for activities designed to continue addressing some needs identified previous in needs assessments. Most activities are designed specifically to expand and improve the vocational rehabilitation services available to people with the most significant disabilities. The Division will continue to solicit ideas and programs that can be used to improve or enhance services to clients with disabilities in the state, possibly to include additional community rehabilitation programs in the state.

The following activities are planned for innovation and expansion funding in fiscal year 2015:

- The Division will provide funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council. Expenditures may include travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, facilitation services, and costs related to consumer satisfaction/outreach. Estimated Cost: \$25,000
- The Division will provide funding support for the State Independent Living Council. Due to Federal grant award reductions in the Title VII, Part B – Independent Living Services program, and estimated decreases in Social Security Reimbursement funds, (program income transfers to the independent living programs), the Division will need to use innovation and expansion funds to support the Council. Expenditures may include travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, and facilitation services.
- Estimated Cost: \$25,000

ii. How a Broad Range of Assistive Technology Services and Devices Will Be Provided to Individuals with Disabilities at Each Stage of the Rehabilitation Process and on a Statewide Basis.

Assistive technology services and devices

A broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices are provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation uses the Centrum for Disabilities, a non-profit agency that provides assistive technology evaluations and equipment to clients throughout the state.

An AgrAbility program developed by the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) began in May 2006 as a grant program administered by the University of Wyoming. The administrator is on the AgrAbility advisory panel, and the Division continues to work with the program to provide assistive technology services to the agricultural community. Assistive technology services and devices are available on a statewide basis.

- iii. The Outreach Procedures That Will Be Used to Identify and Serve Individuals with Disabilities Who Are Minorities, Including Those with the Most Significant Disabilities, as Well as Those Who Have Been Unserved or Underserved by the Vr Program.

Populations that are Unserved or Underserved – Minorities with Disabilities

Objective: Promote opportunities to enhance equal access and quality services for culturally diverse people within the rehabilitation system.

Objective: Arrange for Section 121 project staff to attend the Division's annual counselor and support staff in-service training sessions.

Method: Advise project staff of in-service training through invitations and announcements, including a copy of the agenda.

Objective: Arrange collaboration between the Wyoming Relay/Deaf Services Program and the Section 121 projects on the availability of services.

Method: Provide information to project staff and their consumers on the availability and use of the Wyoming Relay program, and the distribution of text telephone and amplified phones; provide information about obtaining assistive devices, obtaining qualified interpreters, and developing interpreter training that addresses culturally appropriate services.

Objective: Provide supportive services to minorities with disabilities.

Methods: Determine what types of rehabilitation services are currently available to minorities with disabilities in the State of Wyoming.

Identify rehabilitation organizations currently offering services to minorities with disabilities to coordinate services better.

Identify the most critical rehabilitation needs of minorities that currently are not being met by existing services and facilities.

Determine what actions the Division can take to improve rehabilitation services for minorities with disabilities.

The populations discussed below were identified in the 2012 needs assessment as “underserved.” All were being served, but in less-than-representative numbers, or less effectively than other populations. The discussion below focuses on efforts to better serve these groups.

Persons with severe and persistent mental illness.

Objective: Improve and expand services for persons with severe and persistent mental illness.

Method: Encourage the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division to support the expansion of successful employment models for these individuals.

Objective: Continue to develop supported employment services with mental health organizations statewide.

Method: Initiate contacts with mental health centers and promote supported employment services.

Objective: As training becomes available for professionals working with and serving people with mental illnesses, arrange for Division staff and appropriate mental health personnel to attend such training sessions. Invite mental health personnel to attend Division in-services when appropriate topics are involved.

Method: Invite mental health personnel to attend Division in-services free when training is being presented in their area of the state. Alert mental health personnel to training via other independent entities.

- iv. The Methods to Be Used to Improve and Expand Vr Services for Students with Disabilities, Including the Coordination of Services Designed to Facilitate the Transition of Such Students from School to Postsecondary Life (including the Receipt of Vr Services, Postsecondary Education, Employment, and Pre- Employment Transition Services).

Students in Transition from School to Work

Objective: Strengthen and improve the working relationship with the Wyoming Department of Education to increase timely referrals and to provide information and training about how the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation can assist students in transition.

Methods: Continue to involve the Education Department in State Rehabilitation Council activities and meetings.

Continue to encourage local education agencies to identify students with disabilities and make timely referrals to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Division’s two transition consultants will work with the school districts, the Wyoming Education Department, and Division staff statewide.

Objective: Provide support for Division transition counselors.

Methods: Division personnel will meet with local education agencies to identify best-practice policies and to coordinate services between local school districts and Division field offices.

Objective: Encourage local education agencies to make timely referrals to the Division.

Methods: Increase field staff communication with local education agencies regarding the Division's mission and services. Transition consultants will take the lead on developing relationships with local school district administrative staff.

Develop procedures with local education agencies to help facilitate the more timely exchange of information regarding potential transition student referrals.

Division staff will attend individual employment plan meetings when invited by the school.

Identify new systems to improve referrals and working relationships, including replicating successful service models within the state.

Individuals who are intellectually disabled

Objective: Improve and expand services to persons who are intellectually disabled.

Method: The Division partnered with other State agencies to hold an "employment first" conference in July 2014. The goal was to educate consumers and employers about the benefits of integrated and competitive employment.

v. If Applicable, Plans for Establishing, Developing, or Improving Community Rehabilitation Programs Within the State.

At this time, the State Rehabilitation Council and the Division have concluded that there is no need for more community rehabilitation programs in Wyoming. The Council and Division feel a greater need is to ensure that job coaches are qualified to provide the needed services. The Division now requires background checks for all job coaches. Training for all job coaches is being considered.

The Division will continue to monitor vocational rehabilitation services in the state and consult with the members of the Council members on future needs.

vi. Strategies to Improve the Performance of the State with Respect to the Performance Accountability Measures Under Section 116 of WIOA.

Through case reviews, the Division determined there were a large number of clients who, for various reasons, were no longer interested in pursuing services with our agency. Some factors could have been an upturn in the state's economy, making it easier to find jobs without the Division's assistance; relocation for better opportunities; disabilities becoming more severe, so people were not able to work; or an

inability to wait for Division services. Through staffing changes, policy shifts, and closely monitoring such issues, the Division hopes to improve its services to clients and to reduce wait times.

Wyoming's economy is dominated by minerals extraction and construction. As a result, there are limited opportunities for individuals with disabilities to find jobs and to find jobs that pay enough for a person to be independent. The Division continues to seek creative job strategies, including helping clients start small businesses. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is partnering with other divisions within the Department of Workforce Services to educate employers and to develop more employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Division is working with other partners in the Unified Plan to develop opportunities to improve employment in the state. The Division is expanding employer groups throughout the state. These employer groups allow for the education of other businesses on what are the pros and cons of hiring individuals with disabilities and to dispel the myths of hiring these individuals. The division is also looking at what exists to expand the educational opportunities for people with disabilities. This may include assistance to remain in school to receive a high school diploma, work towards earning a high school equivalency, or pursuit of higher education. The Division wants to help all eligible individuals with disabilities to gain the necessary skills to be gainfully employed.

The Division continues to develop referral sources to ensure that people with disabilities who are eligible for the program are being properly referred. The Division also works to locate and develop service providers who can provide needed services to individuals with disabilities in a timely and cost-effective manner. Due to Wyoming's rural nature, this can prove challenging and can affect the provision of services.

vii. Strategies for Assisting Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Development System in Assisting Individuals with Disabilities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with partners that provide services under Wagner-Peyser and the Workforce Investment Act. In many instances, the Division is co-located in the same office to make referrals and providing services more effective. The Division plans to use more effectively its funding resources in connection with these partners to better serve individuals with disabilities. The Division will partner with Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser caseworkers to identify training solutions and other efforts that leverage more resources to help people with disabilities find jobs. The Division also partners with WIA youth caseworkers to explore summer work experience options for students in transition.

viii. How the Agency's Strategies Will Be Used To:

I. Achieve Goals and Priorities by the State, Consistent with the Comprehensive Needs Assessment;

All information for section "8. How the agency's strategies will be used to:" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading C."

II. Support Innovation and Expansion Activities; and

All information for section "8. How the agency's strategies will be used to:" and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading C."

III. Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vr Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

The 2012 assessment of rehabilitation needs identified four populations of concern in Wyoming: Persons with mental illnesses, students with disabilities who are in transition from school to work, persons with intellectual disabilities, and persons with acquired brain injuries.

- Students with disabilities continue to be a special concern for the Division. Because of distances and limited staff available, the Division has struggled to provide adequate services to the 48 school districts in Wyoming. To increase our impact, the Division has hired full-time transition consultants to coordinate effort at the state level, as well as to reach out to the school districts and explain our services and how we can better serve disabled people. The Division has assigned all counselors a local school district or high school to aid in the focus on providing services to students and youth with disabilities.
- The Division will continue working with mental health centers and other community rehabilitation programs to improve job opportunities for clients with mental illnesses and to provide the support services necessary so clients can be successful and independent.
- The Division has designated a staff member to be a liaison with the Veteran's Administration in Wyoming. The goal is to assist in coordinating services for mutual clients, sharing resources, and providing a point of contact for veterans seeking assistance.
- The Division is continuing to work on expanding opportunities for clients to start small businesses. The Division has a full-time small business consultant who reviews all self-employment opportunities to ensure their viability and to provide some start-up funding.
- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work with the State Human Resources Department to ensure that quality applicants are applying for positions with the agency. The Division continues to work with appropriate master's degree programs in the region to identify potential candidates and to explore internship opportunities. The Division posts available openings on the State website and through social media. Other sources of recruitment are identified for geographical areas when it is difficult to find candidates. The Division continues to provide opportunities for staff to earn a master's degree and to be able to sit for the CRC exam. Staff members also are given the opportunity to participate in continuing education training throughout the year to maintain their credentials. In 2014, the Wyoming Legislature approved raises for all staff members who met certain requirements. The raise took effect July 1, 2014, and a second raise was implemented on July 1, 2015.

Memoranda of understanding

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has a memorandum of understanding with the University of Wyoming and the state's community colleges. This MOU is designed to guide the planning and delivery of support services to people with disabilities who are clients of the Division and are enrolled at a Wyoming institution of higher education.

An MOU also is in place with the Section 121 programs on Wyoming's Wind River Indian Reservation. Through this MOU, the Division provides consultations with project staff and Native Americans with disabilities.

The Wyoming Division of Workers' Safety and Compensation and the Division have an MOU to provide rehabilitation services to eligible people who have been injured in job-related accidents. Joint training for both Divisions occurs as needed.

Programs for the deaf

Deaf or hard-of-hearing people face potential barriers to equal access and participation due to their disabilities. The Division has taken steps to ensure equal access and participation in our programs for these individuals.

Training has been provided to Division counselors, assistants, and managers on the use of text telephones; the use of telecommunications relay services (Wyoming Relay, the Internet and video relay); deaf culture; strategies for communicating with hearing-impaired clients; and the use of sign language interpreters. Such training is provided during regional in-services conducted periodically across the state.

The Division collaborates with the Wyoming Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf in many ways. One effort involves identifying all known sign language interpreters in the state; evaluating their skill levels using a method jointly developed by the Division and Registry; and compiling and distributing the list to Division staff, other service providers, government agencies, businesses, and individuals.

Training is offered routinely to service providers, government agencies, and private and businesses. Topics include deaf culture, communication strategies, use of interpreters, use of text telephones, and the Wyoming Relay program. Such training facilitates appropriate referrals to the Division, as well as helping to provide services and jobs for clients.

Wyoming Relay is a program administered by the Division. An ongoing, public awareness campaign includes radio, television, print, and billboard advertising statewide.

P. Evaluation and Reports of Progress: Vr and Supported Employment Goals

Describe

- i. An Evaluation of the Extent to Which the Vr Program Goals Described in the Approved Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the Most Recently Completed Program Year Were Achieved. the Evaluation Must:

I. Identify the Strategies That Contributed to the Achievement of the Goals.

All information for section "p. 1." and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading B.

II. Describe the Factors That Impeded the Achievement of the Goals and Priorities.

Goal 1. Increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Wyoming.

- Rehabilitate at least 715 individuals with disabilities.
- Increase services to minority individuals with disabilities.
- Improve services for students and youth in transition from school to work.
- Improve services to veterans with disabilities.

Results:

- The Division successfully rehabilitated 662 individuals with disabilities.
- In Federal fiscal year 2015, the Division worked with 381 clients who self-identified as something other than white, non-Hispanic. This compared 387 in FFY 2014. (The Division worked with 289 fewer clients in FFY 2015 than in FFY 2014)
- In FFY 2015, the Division worked with 1,439 transition clients compared to 1,562 in FFY 2014.
- The Division worked with 271 identified veterans in FFY 2015 compared to 236 in FFY 2014.

The Division monitored progress monthly on this goal and encouraged staff to continue to close cases successfully. Area managers reviewed case files continuously, had staff make corrections where needed, and trained staff to avoid such issues in future cases.

Goal 2. Increase by 5 percent the number of clients using the Small Business Development Fund and other resources for starting a small business.

In FFY 2015, the Division worked with 41 clients to use this fund compared to 40 in FFY 2014.

Goal 3. Successfully rehabilitate 205 or more supported employment individuals with the most significant disabilities.

In FFY 2015, the Division worked with 316 such persons compared to 272 in FFY 2014.

Goal 4. Meet or exceed all RSA performance standards and indicators.

The Division did not meet standard 1.1 (successful closures). Several factors may have contributed to this, including staff turnover, converting to a new case-management system, low counselor caseloads, and challenges in understanding WIOA requirements.

Goal 5. Continue to improve the recruitment, training, and retention of staff.

Recruitment

Increase the percentage of counselors with master's degree level counselors to 75 percent. Twenty of the Division's 29 counselors have master's degrees, or 69 percent.

Increase the number percentage of counselors with the certified rehabilitation counselor designation to 50 percent. Sixteen of the Division's 29 counselors have this designation, or 55 percent.

Training

Increase training on disability topics relevant to staff needs and agency goals. Train staff on Federal, State, and agency policies and procedures.

The Division conducted one in-service training for all counselors, managers, and consultants and one in-service training for all support staff. Training topics come from the Wyoming Association of Rehabilitation Needs (WYARN), a statewide training needs assessment, quality assurance reviews, and retention/training plans.

Retention

Maintain a staff loss rate of 10 percent or less. During calendar year 2015, 11 staff members (17 percent of staff) left their positions. This compared to 7 staff members who left in calendar year 2014.

Goal 6. Improve services to transition-age clients by increasing successful outcomes by 5 percent.

In Federal fiscal year 2015, the Division closed 188 transition client cases successfully compared to 185 in FFY 2014.

Goal 7. Increase the percentage of ABI clients successfully employed by 5 percent.

In FFY 2015, the Division successfully closed 29 ABI clients compared to 30 in FFY 2014.

Goal 8. Increase the percentage of SPMI clients successfully employed by 5 percent.

In FFY 2015, the Division successfully closed 276 SPMI clients compared to 280 in FFY 2014.

- ii. An Evaluation of the Extent to Which the Supported Employment Program Goals Described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the Most Recent Program Year Were Achieved. the Evaluation Must :

I. Identify the Strategies That Contributed to the Achievement of the Goals.

All information for section "p. 2." and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading B.

II. Describe the Factors That Impeded the Achievement of the Goals and Priorities.

Supported employment services are available statewide. Community rehabilitation programs (including mental health centers) and several independent vendors currently provide services.

Individuals with the most significant disabilities have access to supported employment on a statewide basis. Within each community rehabilitation program, a supported employment coordinator has been designated, and a network of coordinators exists statewide.

Supported employment coordinators market supported employment to employers in their communities. Employers also are prominently involved in supported employment throughout the state.

The Division served 745 clients with supported employment services in Federal fiscal year 2014 and 736 in FFY 2015. This was a decrease of 1.2 percent. The drop can be attributed to staff turnover and the fact that the Division worked with fewer clients in FFY 2013.

The Division will continue to encourage community rehabilitation programs to designate a supported employment coordinator to work closely with the Division to increase referrals, services, and employer education. The Division also is doing more employer outreach.

The Division invites staff of community rehabilitation programs to attend its annual in-service training sessions to learn more about disabilities and supported employment topics.

iii. The Vr Program's Performance on the Performance Accountability Indicators Under Section 116 of WIOA.

As this is the first year of these new performance standards, WY DVR has nothing to report on the progress as of yet.

iv. How the Funds Reserved for Innovation and Expansion (i&e) Activities Were Utilized.

The Division provided funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council. Expenditures included travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, facilitation services, and costs related to consumer satisfaction/outreach efforts.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000

Actual Cost: \$2,425

The Division provided funding support for the State Independent Living Council. Expenditures included travel, stipends, advertising, supplies, meeting room rental, interpreters, facilitation services, and costs related to consumer satisfaction/outreach efforts.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000

Actual Cost: \$16,097

Q. Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services.

Include the following:

- i. The Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services to Be Provided to Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, Including Youth with the Most Significant Disabilities.

All information related to section "q." and related sub-headings is located in sub-heading 2.

ii. The Timing of Transition to Extended Services.

Community rehabilitation programs providing supported employment services in Wyoming must be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. Mental health centers providing supported-employment services must be certified by the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division of the Wyoming Department of Health.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's management information system (Wyoming Rehabilitation and Employment System, or WYRES) includes criteria to measure integration, client satisfaction, scope of service, client wages, hours worked per week, variety of work options, and disability groups served. This data collection system allows the Division to make informed decisions to modify, improve, or expand supported employment services delivered through community rehabilitation programs and mental health centers.

Supported employment services provided to individuals are coordinated through an individual plan for employment. The plan includes a description of the services needed; identification of the State, Federal, or private programs that will provide the extended services; and a description of the basis for determining that extended services are available.

Supported employment services that may be provided to individuals with significant disabilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- If necessary, a supplemental evaluation to the evaluation of rehabilitation potential provided under 34 CFR Part 361.
- Job development and placement into competitive, community integrated employment.

- Traditionally time-limited services needed to support employment trainees, such as:
 - o Intensive on-the-job skills training and other training provided by skilled job trainers, co-workers, and other qualified individuals, and other services specified in 34 CFR Part 361.48, in order to achieve and maintain job stability;
 - o Follow-up services, including regular contact with employers, trainees with significant disabilities, parents, guardians, or other representatives of trainees and other suitable professional and informed advisors to reinforce and stabilize the job placement; and
 - o Discrete post-employment services following successful case closure by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation that are unavailable from an extended services provider and that are necessary to maintain the job placement.

Each client's individual employment plan describes the timing of transition into extended services provided by other state agencies and private non-profit organizations following the termination of time-limited services by the Division. The Division will provide traditionally time-limited services for a maximum of 18 months unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the individual employment plan.

Supported employment services are available statewide, with 19 community rehabilitation programs currently providing services. The following describes improvements in quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services statewide:

- Nineteen community rehabilitation programs (including mental health centers) throughout Wyoming have implemented supported employment programs;
- People with the most significant disabilities have access to supported employment services on a statewide basis;
- Within each community rehabilitation program, a supported-employment coordinator has been designated, and a network of coordinators exists statewide;
- Supported employment coordinators market supported employment to employers in their communities;
- Employers are prominently involved in supported employment efforts throughout Wyoming;
- The Department of Health, Division of Developmental Disabilities, continues to be used as a resource for supported employment services for individuals with ABI;
- The Wyoming Centrum for Disability Services was created in 1998 at Central Wyoming Community College with the strong support of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Between 1998 and 2004, the Centrum delivered assistive technology and job site accommodations to people statewide with significant disabilities. The Centrum has been reorganized as an off-campus 501(c)(3) corporation and provides Social Security benefits information related to the Ticket to Work program.
- The Division completed an MOU with the Department of Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division, in September 2007. The aim is to enhance the working relationship between the divisions to provide more effective services to

individuals with disabilities in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes increased collaboration in the evaluations, planning, and delivery of supported employment services for persons with SPMI and for transition-age youth. Joint training on a bi-annual basis will focus on these issues, among others.

Certifications

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate

Name of designated State agency

Full Name of Authorized Representative:

Title of Authorized Representative:

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.**
2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the designated State agency listed above agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan*, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;**
4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.
6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.

7. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;

8. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;

9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

Footnotes

Certification 1 Footnotes

* Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

*** Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in

*** under Certification 2 footnotes

Additional Comments on the Certifications from the State
Certification Regarding Lobbying — Vocational Rehabilitation

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee Page 309 of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization

Full Name of Authorized Representative:

Title of Authorized Representative:

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

Certification Regarding Lobbying — Supported Employment

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

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The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization

Full Name of Authorized Representative:

Title of Authorized Representative:

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable) (<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>).

Assurances

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

a. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

b. Submission of the Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement:

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

c. Administration of the Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

1. The Establishment of the Designated State Agency and Designated State Unit, as Required by Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. The Establishment of Either a State Independent Commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as Required by Section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act.
3. Consultations Regarding the Administration of the Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in Accordance with Section 101(a)(16)(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
4. The Financial Participation by the State, or if the State So Elects, by the State and Local Agencies, to Provide the Amount of the Non-Federal Share of the Cost of Carrying Out the Vr Program in Accordance with Section 101(a)(3).

5. The Local Administration of the Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in Accordance with Section 101(a)(2)(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6. The Shared Funding and Administration of Joint Programs, in Accordance with Section 101(a)(2)(a)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Statewideness and Waivers of Statewideness Requirements, as Set Forth in Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act.
8. The Descriptions for Cooperation, Collaboration, and Coordination, as Required by Sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(b); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
9. All Required Methods of Administration, as Required by Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act .
10. The Requirements for the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, as Set Forth in Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
11. The Compilation and Submission to the Commissioner of Statewide Assessments, Estimates, State Goals and Priorities, Strategies, and Progress Reports, as Appropriate, and as Required by Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
12. The Reservation and Use of a Portion of the Funds Allotted to the State Under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the Development and Implementation of Innovative Approaches to Expand and Improve the Provision of Vr Services to Individuals with Disabilities, Particularly Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities.
13. The Submission of Reports as Required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.

d. Administration of the Provision of Vr Services:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

1. Comply with All Requirements Regarding Information and Referral Services in Accordance with Sections 101(a)(5)(d) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Impose No Duration of Residence Requirement as Part of Determining an Individual's Eligibility for Vr Services or That Excludes from Services Under the Plan Any Individual Who is Present in the State in Accordance with Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act .
3. Provide the Full Range of Services Listed in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as Appropriate, to All Eligible Individuals with Disabilities in the State Who Apply for Services in Accordance with Section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act?
4. Determine Whether Comparable Services and Benefits Are Available to the Individual in Accordance with Section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.

5. Comply with the Requirements for the Development of an Individualized Plan for Employment in Accordance with Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
6. Comply with Requirements Regarding the Provisions of Informed Choice for All Applicants and Eligible Individuals in Accordance with Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Provide Vocational Rehabilitation Services to American Indians Who Are Individuals with Disabilities Residing in the State, in Accordance with Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
8. Comply with the Requirements for the Conduct of Semiannual or Annual Reviews, as Appropriate, for Individuals Employed Either in an Extended Employment Setting in a Community Rehabilitation Program or Any Other Employment Under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as Required by Section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act.
9. Meet the Requirements in Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State Elects to Construct, Under Special Circumstances, Facilities for Community Rehabilitation Programs
10. With Respect to Students with Disabilities, the State,
 - A. Has Developed and Will Implement,
 - i. Strategies to Address the Needs Identified in the Assessments; and
 - ii. Has Developed and Will Implement Strategies to Provide Pre- Employment Transition Services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25)).
 - B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals and Priorities Identified by the State, to Improve and Expand Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Students with Disabilities on a Statewide Basis; and
 - e. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title Vi Supplement:
 1. The Designated State Unit Assures That it Will Include in the Vr Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan All Information Required by Section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
 2. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Submit Reports in Such Form and in Accordance with Such Procedures as the Commissioner May Require and Collects the Information Required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act Separately for Individuals Receiving Supported Employment Services Under Title I and Individuals Receiving Supported Employment Services Under Title Vi of the Rehabilitation Act.
 3. The Designated State Unit Will Coordinate Activities with Any Other State Agency That is Functioning as an Employment Network Under the Ticket to Work and Self-sufficiency Program Under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.
 - f. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:

1. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Expend No More Than 2.5 Percent of the State's Allotment Under Title Vi for Administrative Costs of Carrying Out This Program; And, the Designated State Agency or Agencies Will Provide, Directly or Indirectly Through Public or Private Entities, Non-federal Contributions in an Amount That is Not Less Than 10 Percent of the Costs of Carrying Out Supported Employment Services Provided to Youth with the Most Significant Disabilities with the Funds Reserved for Such Purpose Under Section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in Accordance with Section 606(b)(7)(g) and (h) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Use Funds Made Available Under Title Vi of the Rehabilitation Act Only to Provide Supported Employment Services to Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, Including Extended Services to Youth with the Most Significant Disabilities, Who Are Eligible to Receive Such Services; And, That Such Funds Are Used Only to Supplement and Not Supplant the Funds Provided Under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when Providing Supported Employment Services Specified in the Individualized Plan for Employment, in Accordance with Section 606(b)(7)(a) and (d), of the Rehabilitation Act.

g. Provision of Supported Employment Services:

1. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. The Designated State Agency Assures That:

A. The Comprehensive Assessment of Individuals with Significant Disabilities Conducted Under Section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and Funded Under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act Includes Consideration of Supported Employment as an Appropriate Employment Outcome, in Accordance with the Requirements of Section 606(b)(7)(b) of the Rehabilitation Act

B. An Individualized Plan for Employment That Meets the Requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act , Which is Developed and Updated with Title I Funds, in Accordance with Sections 102(b)(3)(f) and 606(b)(6)(c) and (e) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Additional Comments on the Assurances from the State

e. Vocational Rehabilitation Program Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	PY 2016 Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated Level	PY 2017 Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains				
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹	Not Applicable ¹

¹

“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program— and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the Program-Specific Requirements for that program (available on www.regulations.gov for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these Program-Specific Requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.